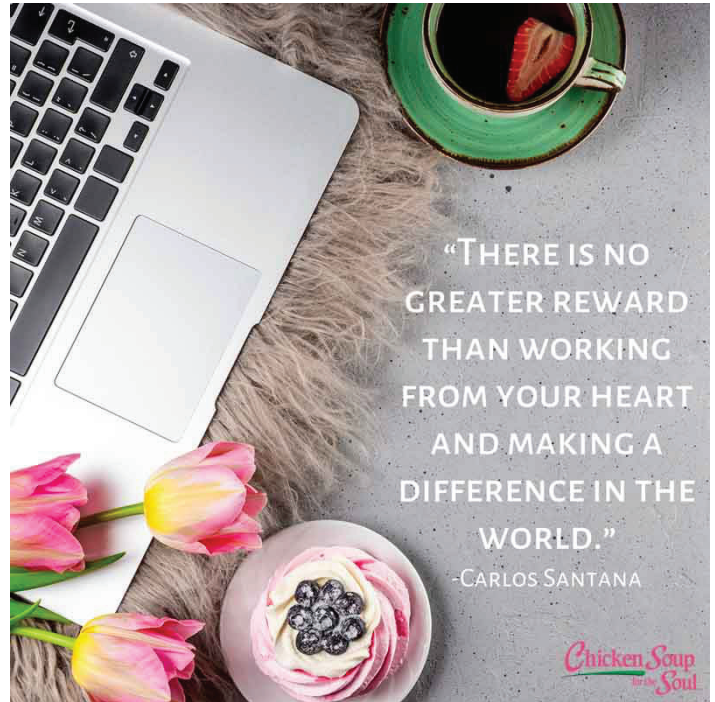


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- [2- Weber Landscaping Greenhouse Ad](#)
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- [13- School Board Meeting Info](#)
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**Due to the weather forecast the
Rob Luecke Track Invitational
scheduled for Tuesday April
13th has been cancelled.**



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

**Weber
Landscaping
Greenhouse
opening this
Spring!**



**We will have a full greenhouse of beautiful
annuals and vegetables.**

Opening First Week of May!

**Located behind 204 N State St, Groton
(Look for the flags)**

**LET US HELP YOU BRIGHTEN
UP YOUR YARD!**

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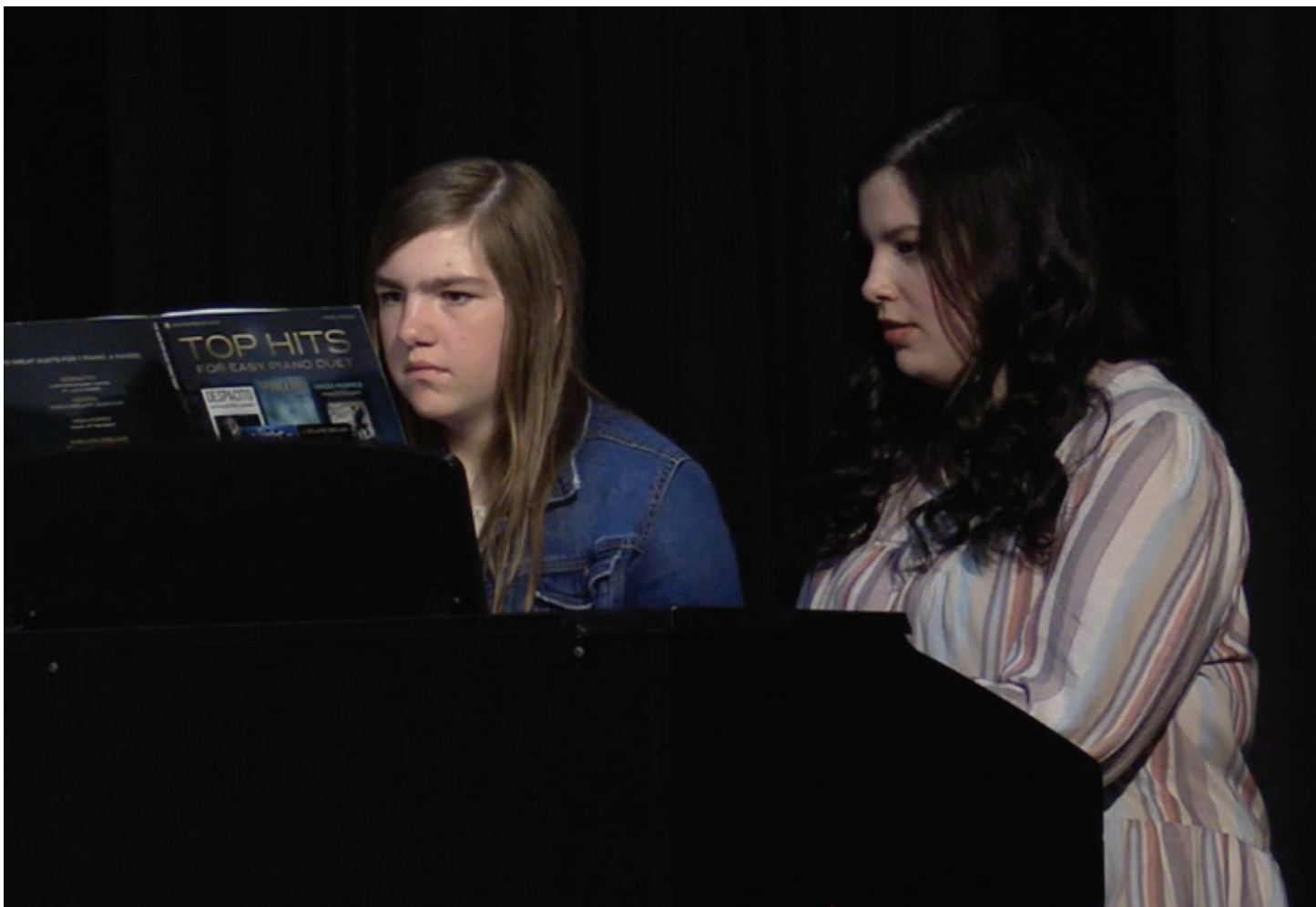
Jacob Lewandowski and Isaac Smith were the masters of ceremony for the POPS Concert held Sunday. They just announced that cell phones were suppose to be turned off when Smith "got" a phone call.

The Jazz Band did not perform this year due to COVID-19; however, there were a lot of individual performances to fill the gap. Here is Carter Barse leading things off with, "Edge of Seventeen."



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Emily Clark and Elliana Weismantel performed a piano duet entitled, "Shallow."



Ashtyn Bahr sang, "Driver's License." She was accompanied by Elliana Weismantel.

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Julianna Kosel sang, "Blessings."



Anna Bisbee sang, "Welcome to Wonderland."

Elianna Weismantel performed a piano solo entitled, "Ain't No Sunshine."



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Cadance Tullis and Elliana Weismantel performed a Marimba duet entitled, "Somebody You Loved."



Camryn Kurtz and Anna Bisbee sang a duet entitled, "Rolling in the Deep."

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The Front Boulevard Men had a comedy and they performed a melody mashup.



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Trinity Smith sang, "Die from a Broken Heart."



Shaylee Peterson sang, "Journey to the Past."

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Cadance Tullis sang, "Chasing Pavements."



Senior Alexis Hanten took a moment to thank everyone for supporting the music department and for supporting her high school singing career. She sang, "Thank You for the Music."

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The music directors also performed. Austin Fordham, Kayla Duncan and Desiree Yeigh sang, "Fire and Fury."



Kamryn Fliehs sang, "La Vie En Rose."

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Trinity Smith, Ashtyn Bahr, Hailey Monson, Elliana Weismantel, Sierra Ehresmann and Shaylee Peterson were the backup singers to ALEXIS Hanten as they performed, "I Won't Say (I'm in Love).



Alexis Hanten (left) and Julianna Kosel (right) along with Camryn Kurtz had a show choir part during a transition.

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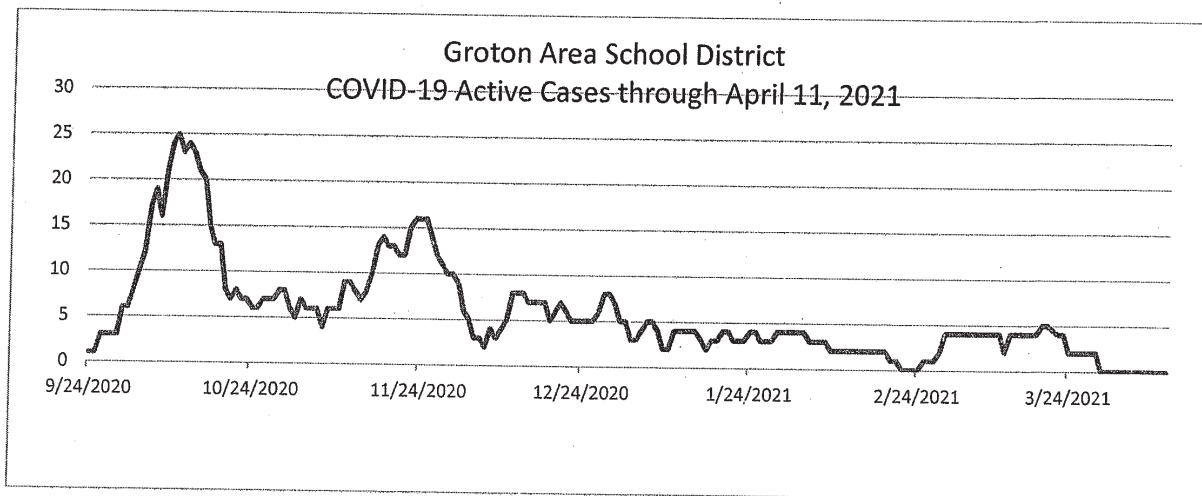


The show choir performed several selections at the end of the POPS Concert.



Superintendent's Report to the Groton Area School District 06-6 Board of Education
April 12, 2021

Groton Area School District COVID Data Update.



To date we've had 107 total confirmed cases of COVID-19 [14.76%] of students or staff members of our District (35 staff members [35.0%], 23 elementary students [7.23%], 17 middle school students [12.41%], and 32 [17.58%] high school students [21.4%]).

Brown County data to date indicates 5,376 infections of total population 38,839 [13.84%].

Statewide data to date indicates 119,467 infections of total population 884,659 [13.50%].

Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Testing. As of the end of the day, we've conducted 173 tests. 41 have been positive (23.70%).

COVID-related Issues.

Plans are underway for the following events:

1. PROM - April 24, 2021
2. MS, Elementary, HS Spring concerts – April 29, 2021; May 4, 2021; May 6, 2021
3. Elementary field trips
4. Elementary track and field day – May 6, 2021
5. Graduation – May 16, 2021

The only restriction that I would suggest we maintain is requiring students with symptoms or who are close contacts to someone within their household to stay home.

I'm recommending that we cease with mid-day temperature checks for students.

I'm recommending that we amend our policy on masking on district transportation to "recommended" vs. "required."

Langford Cooperative. We have a meeting scheduled with representatives from the Langford School District on Tuesday, April 13 to discuss the cooperative further. Our committee met tonight to discuss issues and the requests for information.

Department of Education Survey. The South Dakota Department of Education is requiring all accredited schools (our district will submit three surveys – Elementary, Middle School, High School) to complete a comprehensive survey about the 2020-2021 school year which addresses: modes of instruction, student engagement, learning loss, interim assessment, special education services, EL services, student access to electronic devices/internet, mitigation measures,

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and teacher supports and expectations. The surveys are due by Friday, May 21 and a report on South Dakota schools is expected to be published in the summer of 2021.

2020-2021 School Calendar. The last day of school for the 2020-2021 school year is currently Friday, May 7 barring any school cancellation between now and then.

ESSER 3 Grant Funding. We do not have our official grant allocation from the ESSER 3 grant funding but have been told to plan the grant to be in the amount 2.25 times the grant amount initially awarded to schools under ESSER 2 (\$256,913). Based on this, we believe our ESSER 3 grant will be approximately \$578,000. We do not have full guidance on the parameters around ESSER 3 funding at this time but expect more specific spending requirements than under ESSER 1 or ESSER 2.

Teacher TEAMS. The administrative team met with a small group of teachers last week to discuss the potential implementation of a comprehensive TEAM (commonly called committees) system to aid in the collaborative communication between teachers and between teachers and administrators on a variety of issues. This group of teachers is considering the concept and discussing with their colleagues and we're planning to meet again on Monday, April 19 to discuss further if the concept is viable and worthwhile.

NWEA Assessments. The administrative team has a meeting scheduled with representatives from NWEA on Thursday, April 21. NWEA is a Portland, OR based non-profit that has developed a well-known and respected interim assessment system for PreK-12 schools.

Curriculum Review Cycle. We've made some adjustments to our curriculum review cycle since the board has last approved due to changes in the standards review schedule determined by the SD Board of Education Standards. Based on the latest standards review schedule, next year we'll be reviewing PE, K-12 Technology, Architecture/Construction, and Foundations of CTE. In 2022-2023 we'll review Ag Food and Natural Resources, Personal Finance, Fine Arts, and Social Studies.

Curriculum Review Cycle	
Adopted According to DOE Standards Revision and Adoption Timeline	
2021-2022	Physical Education, K-12 Technology, Architecture/Construction, Foundations of CTE
2022-2023	Ag Food and Natural Resources, Personal Finance, Fine Arts, Social Studies
2023-2024	Science, Business
2024-2025	
2025-2026	English Language Arts, Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings
2026-2027	Mathematics, Architecture/Construction, Foundations of CTE,
2027-2028	Ag Food and Natural Resources, Personal Finance, Human Services
2028-2029	Physical Education, K-12 Technology
2029-2030	Social Studies, Fine Arts
2030-2031	Science
2031-2032	Architecture
2032-2033	English Language Arts, Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings, Ag Food and Natural Resources, Personal Finance, Human Services

SB177. School Administrators of South Dakota (SASD) Executive Director, Rob Monson, is working to coordinate with South Dakota Department of Education to establish guidance around SB177, commonly referred to as the homeschool bill. We will keep you updated and, at some point, have to amend policy on this issue prior to July 1 when the new legislation becomes law.

Executive Order 2021-05. On March 29, 2021 Governor Noem issued executive order 2021-05 related to participation of transgender student-athletes in women's sports.

On March 30, 2021, The SD Department of Education issued a memorandum on the issue that included a draft policy for board consideration and referenced a letter to SD Legislators from the governor calling for resolution on this issue through legislative action.

On March 31, 2021, South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA), School Administrators of South Dakota (SASD), and Associated School Boards of South Dakota (ASBSD) issued a recommendation that school boards take no action on the model policy until the three branches of state government determine the proper course of action.

District is in solid financial state; COVID-19 restrictions being lifted

It was all good news at the Groton Area Board of Education meeting held Monday night. Business Manager Mike Weber reported that the district is in solid financial state. He said that the district is about \$350,000 ahead of last year with the majority of that coming from federal funding.

The district is heading back to a sense of normality with COVID-19 becoming a minimal threat. "It makes me excited for next fall," said Superintendent Joe Schwan.

The district has not had any COVID-19 cases for the past two weeks. He said the rapid tests are way down and the district sent two boxes back to the state before they expire so they can be used in other areas.

With several big events coming up, Schwan said the only restriction is for sick kids to stay home. The midschool temperature testing will be done away with - there were only a couple of students who had high temperature for the entire year. Also, the policy will be amended on busses for masking from required to recommended. It was also reported that all staff members who wanted the COVID Vaccine shot had their second one last week. There are a few that decided not to get the vaccine.

The eighth bus route that was started this year to pick up students in the Bath area has worked well, but the district is short drivers and Mike and Loren have had to run that route, taking them away from other responsibilities.

The food service account is looking good, according to Superintendent Joe Schwan, as the district is being reimbursed for all meals as all meals are currently free due to COVID-19 regulations.

All of the administrations returned their signed contracts for another year.

Greg Kjellsen was hired as the boys junior high basketball coach for the 2021-22 school year.

Shaun Wanner was hired as the head track coach for the 2021-22 school year.

The board approved the use of a school bus on April 22 for St. John's Lutheran Church for the Watertown Zoo.

The board approved the 2021-22 North Central Special Education Cooperative Membership Agreement.

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Principal's Report

MS/HS Building

Mrs. Sombke

April 12, 2021

1) Dual Credit Registration Continued

-Due to Smarter Balanced Testing last week not all students were able to get registered for Fall 2021 classes

-Juniors and Seniors will continue to sign up and register for Dual Credit courses through SDBOR Schools and SD Technical Colleges throughout this week

-Please email or contact Mrs. Schwan with any questions @ Jodi.Schwan@k12.sd.us or to call the school at 605-397-8381

2) Prom/Post Prom

-April 24th, Grand March at 7:00pm

-Post Prom sponsored by MS/HS PAC

-Post Prom will travel to "Allevity"; students will be eligible to have their prom sign up fee returned by staying through the distribution of prizes after returning from Allevity

3) Track Volunteer Concessions Workers still needed

-Students in grades 9-12 may see Mrs. Ulmer to continue to sign up for working Concessions during track meets to earn volunteer hours for scholarships

4) Smarter Balanced Make-Up Testing

-Ms. Seeklander will continue to do make up testing through this week; please email or contact Ms. Seeklander with questions regarding make up testing if your child was absent during Spring Testing

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Elementary Principal

Brett Schwan

4/12/2021

Last Day of School: Our last day of school will be on Friday, May 7. We will be dismissing at the elementary at noon.

DARE Graduation: We have tentatively scheduled our DARE graduation on Thursday, May 6th at 10:00 in the arena.

End of the Year Testing: Our DIBELs testing window is now open for students to take their end of the year assessment. This assessment is given 3 times per year. We also do progress monitoring as needed.

State Testing: Our 5th grade students will be taking the SD Science Assessment the week of April 12. SBAC testing for 3rd-5th grade students will begin on April 19. Students will be taking one section of the assessment each day. Ms. Seeklander is also scheduling our remote learnings to come in and take the assessment with her.

Track and Field Day: We will be having track and field day this year on May 6 starting at 12:30 for JK-5th. Just a reminder to all families we will not be having a picnic this year before track and field.

Elementary Music Concert: Elementary Spring music concert will be held on May 4th at 7:00 at the high school gymnasium. This will be an in person performance and all are welcome.

Summer Programs: We will be holding our summer school program (Connect 4 Ed) on May 12-26 and July 19-30. Special Education ESY will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays in June and July, and staff will not be meeting the week of the 4th. The library will also be open for summer hours. These hours will be sent home before the end of the school year.

Class Field Trips:

Date	Grade	Location
Wednesday, May 5	5th grade	Ft Sisseton
Wednesday, May 5	2nd Grade	Watertown Zoo
Monday, May 3	3rd Grade	Laura Ingalls Wilder, DeSmet, SD
Wednesday, May 5th	4th Grade	Laura Ingalls Wilder, DeSmet, SD
Friday, April 30	Kindergarten	Aberdeen SD
Monday, May 3	1st	Aberdeen SD
Friday, April 30	Junior Kindergarten	Zoellner Farm



**From left to right:
Carlee Johnson (Horn) and Gretchen Dinger (Flute)**

(Courtesy Photo)

Dinger and Johnson accepted into SD Middle School All State Band

In December 2020, The South Dakota Music Education Association made the decision to cancel all SD-MEA Events, due to COVID-19. Before this decision was made, 8th Grader Gretchen Dinger and 6th Grader Carlee Johnson had sent in their auditions for the 2021 SD Middle School All State Band. The decision was made to still seat and honor the students, even though the event was not going to be held.

The audition process for this band requires sending in a recording of a chromatic scale, a selected major and minor scale, an etude in 4/4 time, and an etude in 6/8 time. There were a total of 370 auditions sent in from the state of South Dakota, with 53 schools represented.

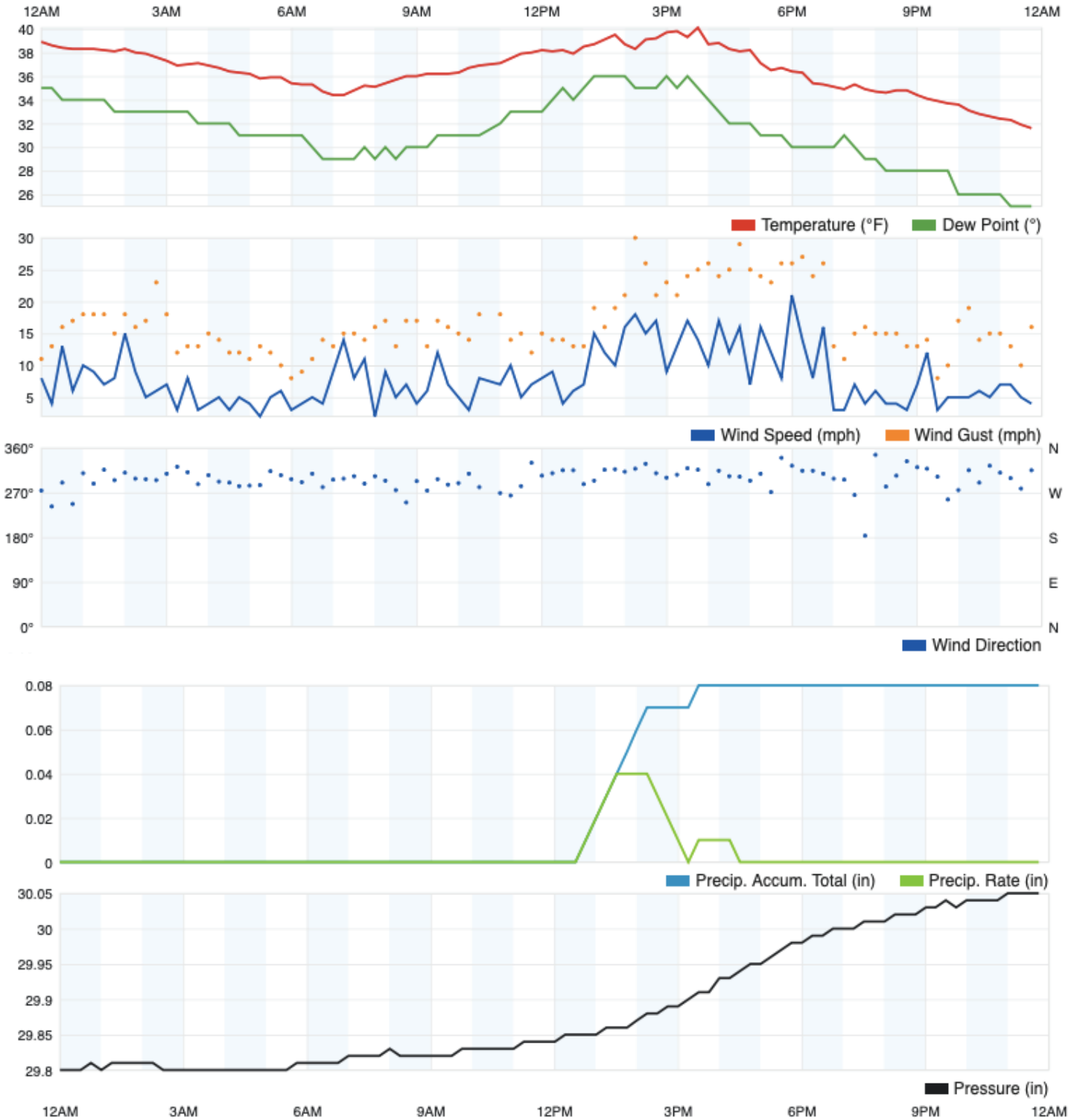
Both Dinger and Johnson were accepted into the top Honor Band. Dinger also received the high honor of being a three-year member. She is the first student from Groton Area to earn this honor. These ladies will be honored and recognized at the Middle School Band Concert on Thursday April 29th.

Congratulations Gretchen and Carlee on a wonderful accomplishment!

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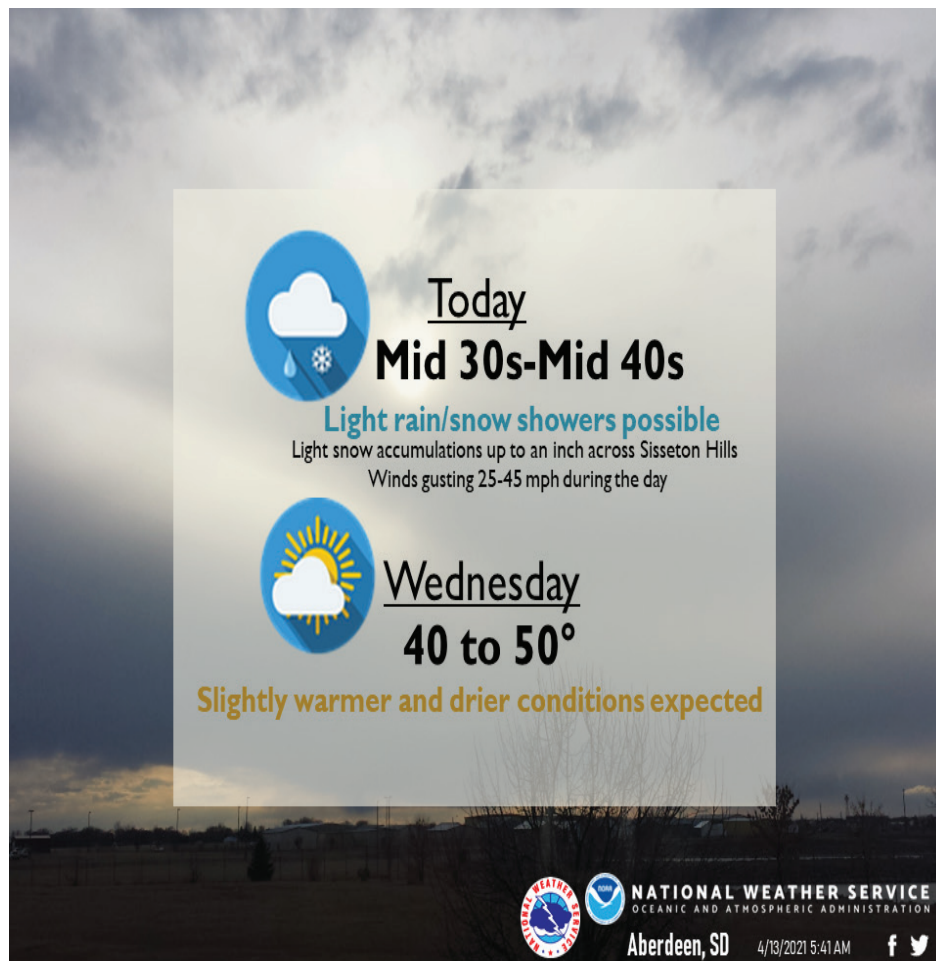
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
				
Breezy. Slight Chance Snow Showers then Chance Rain/Snow	Chance Rain/Snow and Blustery	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
High: 36 °F	Low: 25 °F	High: 43 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 45 °F



Today
Mid 30s-Mid 40s
Light rain/snow showers possible
Light snow accumulations up to an inch across Sisseton Hills
Winds gusting 25-45 mph during the day

Wednesday
40 to 50°
Slightly warmer and drier conditions expected

 **NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
Aberdeen, SD 4/13/2021 5:41 AM  

A persistent area of low pressure located northeast of our region will continue to send chilly temperatures on gusty northwest winds into the area today. Along with the cloudy skies and cool temps, scattered rain and snow showers will be possible at times throughout the day. Some light accumulations up to an inch or so will be possible for the higher terrain areas of the Sisseton Hills. Conditions will slowly improve later tonight and through the day on Wednesday. Drier conditions should gradually win out through the mid-week time period as temperatures slowly moderate.

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Today in Weather History

April 13, 1986: A significant spring storm quickly intensified bringing blizzard conditions to much of the Northern Plains Region. Up to 18 inches of snow was reported in North Dakota, and in South Dakota, winds gusting to 90 mph whipped the snow into drifts fifteen feet high. Livestock losses were in the millions of dollars, and for some areas, it was the worst blizzard ever.

April 13, 1995: Flooding, resulting from snowmelt from the two major snowstorms in April and saturated soils, caused extensive road damage and inundation. The flooding caused several road closings and numerous flooded basements in many counties. Also, many lakes were overfull in Day and Campbell Counties. Flooded farmland caused severe delays in small grain planting. Spink, Sully, McPherson, and Brown Counties were declared disasters.

April 13, 2010: Unyielding south winds developed over central and northeast South Dakota in the early afternoon and continued into the early evening hours. South winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to near 70 mph caused some structural and shingled damage across the area. A pickup on Interstate-90 lost a camper to the high winds. The high winds, combined with lowered humidity and dry fuels, helped fan several grassland fires across the region. The most substantial fire started from a downed power line in Campbell County near the town of Glenham. The fire grew to be five miles long by two miles wide and traveled eight miles before it was under control. Almost 6000 acres were burned with nearly 20 fire departments dispatched.

1999: A two-mile-wide area of wind-driven hail pounded residences and farm equipment for about a 5 mile stretch at least as far as State Highway 158 in west Texas near Midland/Odessa. Hail grew up to about golf ball size and winds peaked at approximately 80 mph. The wind-driven hail broke windows in houses and blasted paint off the wooden siding. The strong winds took roofs off several mobile homes and at least one single-family house. Utility crews stated that the winds downed a total of 27 poles. The American Red Cross determined that 324 units were affected with 18 mobile homes and four houses destroyed. About 50-60 families were at least temporarily displaced.

2006: An F2 tornado hit Iowa City, Iowa and trekked across other Southeast parts of the University of Iowa campus doing 15+ million dollars damage hurting 30 people and damaging or destroying 1051 buildings. The roof/steeple/ bricks fell from the St. Patrick's Church shortly after 75 parishioners had taken to the rectory basement next door.

1877 - The second coastal storm in just three days hit Virginia and the Carolinas. The first storm flattened the sand dunes at Hatteras, and widened the Oregon inlet three quarters of a mile. The second storm produced hurricane force winds along the coast of North Carolina causing more beach erosion and land transformation. (David Ludlum)

1955 - The town of Axis, AL, was deluged with 20.33 inches of rain in 24 hours establishing a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - A major spring storm quickly intensified bringing blizzard conditions to much of the Northern Plains Region. Up to 18 inches of snow was reported in North Dakota, and in South Dakota, winds gusting to 90 mph whipped the snow into drifts fifteen feet high. Livestock losses were in the millions of dollars, and for some areas it was the worst blizzard ever. (Storm Data)

1987 - Thunderstorms in northern Texas produced wind gusts to 98 mph at the Killeen Airport causing a million dollars property damage. Two airplanes were totally destroyed by the high winds, and ten others were damaged. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure off the Atlantic coast produced high winds across North Carolina, with gusts to 78 mph reported at Waves. The high winds combined with high tides to cause coastal flooding and erosion. About 275 feet of land was eroded from the northern tip of Pea Island. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms in central Florida produced golf ball size hail and a tornado near Lakeland FL. Fair and mild weather prevailed across most of the rest of the nation. (Storm Data) (The National Weather

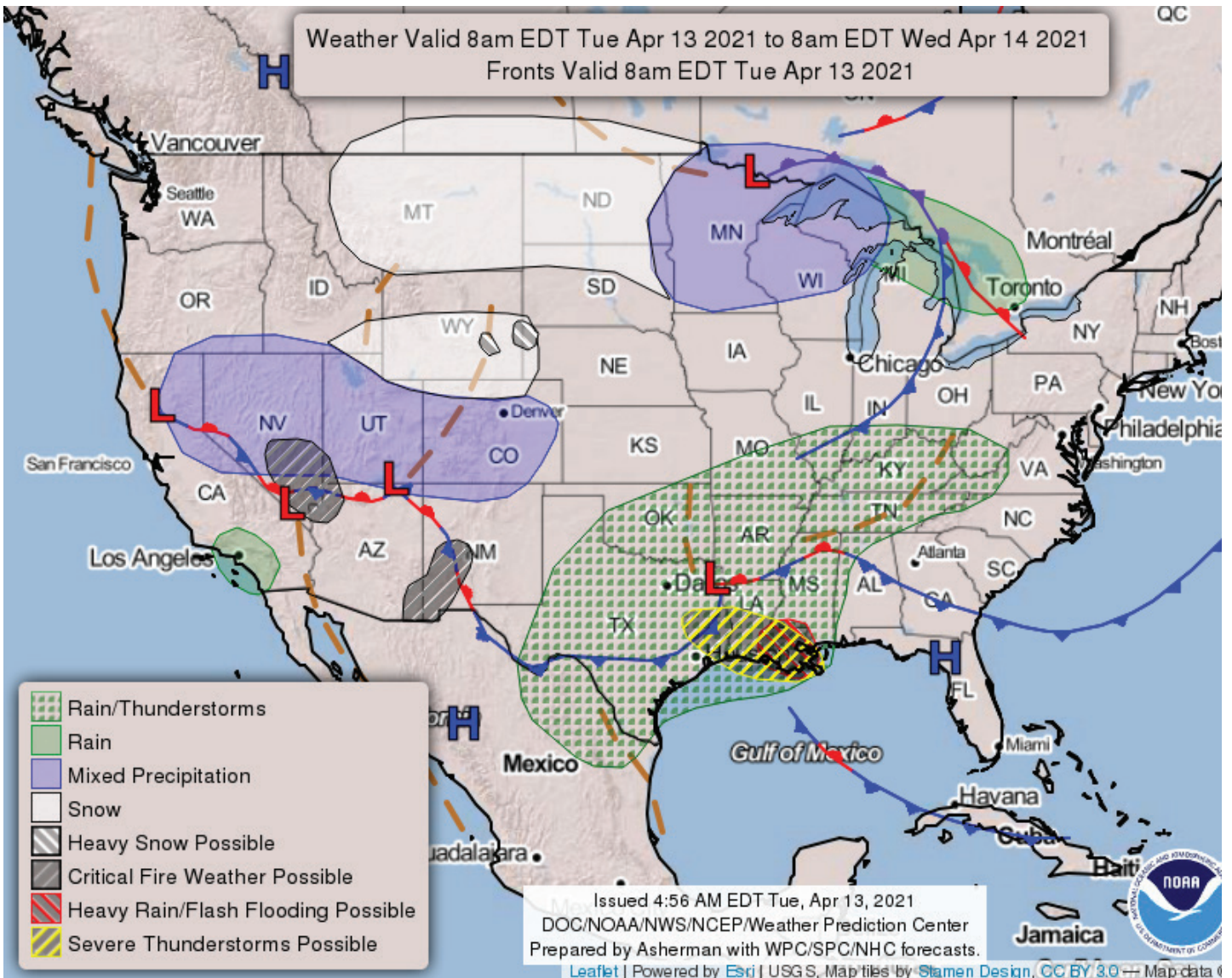
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 40 °F at 3:06 PM
Low Temp: 31 °F at 11:49 PM
Wind: 30 mph at 2:12 PM
Precip: .08

Record High: 92° in 2003
Record Low: 9° in 2013
Average High: 56°F
Average Low: 31°F
Average Precip in Apr.: 0.57
Precip to date in Apr.: 2.29
Average Precip to date: 2.75
Precip Year to Date: 2.47
Sunset Tonight: 8:18 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:50 a.m.



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WAITING ON GOD

Paul gave the Thessalonians a stern warning: "stay away from every person who is idle and does not live according to His teachings." So what are God's "teachings" about those "spaces" in life when nothing seems to be happening? We are to learn to hope in Him, ultimately and completely depend on Him, be loyal and obedient to Him, and have faith and trust in Him, believing that He is working "quietly" in our best interests.

"I know the plans I have for you," said the Lord through Jeremiah. "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Since these "plans" originate with the Lord, we are to place our lives in His hands and with hope wait only on Him. It is unfortunate when we lose patience in Him and move forward on our own, not knowing where we are going. His plans are good plans, well designed and carefully thought out. So, we must wait before Him in silent expectancy.

But we must also keep His ways during these "spaces" by being obedient to Him. While waiting we will surely be tempted to give up or give in and seek a "shortcut" that could lead to defeat and disaster. When we keep or walk in His way, we can be certain that we will end up where He wants us to be not where we think He wants us to be.

Finally, we must "keep the faith." Perhaps the greatest enemy of waiting on God's best is the immediate gratification of the fleeting. Waiting and keeping the faith assures us that we will ultimately receive God's best for us. Living a life of faith is not easy, but always rewarding.

Prayer: Lord, may we learn to wait patiently for You, stay close by You, hope in You, and enjoy a future with You. Remove our anxiety and doubt. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Put your hope in the Lord. Travel steadily along his path. He will honor you by giving you the land. You will see the wicked destroyed. Psalm 37:34

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2021 Community Events

- Cancelled** Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
03/27/2021 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
04/10/2021 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
04/24/2021 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/25/2021 Princess Prom (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/01/2021 Lions Club Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/31/2021 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
6/7-9/2021 St. John's Lutheran Church VBS
06/18/2021 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
06/19/2021 Lions Crazy Golf Fest at Olive Grove Golf Course, Noon
07/04/2021 Firecracker Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
07/11/2021 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 10am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
07/22/2021 Pro-Am Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/30/2021-08/03/2021 State "B" American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
08/06/2021 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course
09/11/2021 Lions Club Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/12/2021 Sunflower Classic Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
09/18-19 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/08/2021 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
10/09/2021 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm (Saturday before Columbus Day)
10/29/2021 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2021 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
11/13/2021 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/25/2021 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/11/2021 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-Noon

News from the Associated Press

Two additional suspects sought in fatal motel shooting

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police are looking for two additional suspects in connection with a fatal motel shooting.

Authorities believe five people were involved in the death of 20-year-old Jesus Vance at the South Dakota Rose Inn last Friday. Three are in custody, including a 37-year-old man who was wounded at the motel.

Investigators say surveillance footage showed two vehicles leaving the area shortly after the shooting took place. One was located in the area where occupants on the vehicle were seen entering a nearby residence. They were detained and interviewed by police about their potential involvement in the shooting.

The second vehicle was also located and its occupants were detained.

Two of three in custody are being held on second-degree kidnapping and aggravated assault charges. Warrants have been issued for a 32-year-old woman and a 35-year-old man wanted for aiding and abetting.

South Dakota reports 187 new COVID-19 cases in last 2 days

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials on Monday confirmed 187 new COVID-19 cases and one new death over the last two days.

The state Department of Health reported that a Hughes County man in his 60s died from complications due to the coronavirus. There have been 12 fatalities in April and 1,947 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

South Dakota's death count is the eighth highest per capita in the country at nearly 221 deaths per 100,000 people, according to Johns Hopkins University researchers.

There were 279 new cases per 100,000 people in South Dakota over the past two weeks, which ranks 21st in the country for new cases per capita. One in every 656 people in South Dakota tested positive in the past week, researchers said.

Nearly 120,000 people have tested positive for the virus in South Dakota.

Montana Tech will study ground at collapsed mine

BLACK HAWK, S.D. (AP) — Experts from Montana Technological University will soon begin to analyze the what lies underground in Black Hawk neighborhood where homes have been evacuated because ground over an abandoned mine collapsed.

A law firm representing some of the residents of Hideaway Hills recently announced another possible mine has been discovered besides a surface mine and the collapsed mine.

"This concept of this new third mine we find very alarming, very concerning that this is a possibility, and we're quite satisfied that the community's come together and so have the various law firms have come together Fox Rothschild, Fitzgerald, and Beardsy Law Firm to agree that we need to have more study to figure this out," says Patrick Ealy with Fitzgerald Law Firm.

So next month, Montana Tech experts will search for answers, K OTA-TV reported.

"It's like a ticking time bomb almost, you really don't know like when the grounds going to collapse or where it might or whose going to be there," neighbor Heather Kusick said.

At least 30 people who lost their homes when the ground collapsed and exposed the abandoned mine have now signed on to a lawsuit seeking compensation from the state of South Dakota.

The Hideaway Hills residents say the state mined underneath the entire neighborhood up until 1993 but failed to reclaim or warn buyers about the now-collapsing mine.

US recommends 'pause' for J&J vaccine over clot reports

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. is recommending a “pause” in administration of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine to investigate reports of potentially dangerous blood clots.

In a joint statement Tuesday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration said they were investigating clots in six women that occurred in the days after vaccination. The clots were observed along with reduced platelet counts — making the usual treatment for blood clots, the blood thinner heparin, potentially “dangerous.”

More than 6.8 million doses of the J&J vaccine have been administered in the U.S., the vast majority with no or mild side effects.

U.S. federal distribution channels, including mass vaccination sites, will pause the use of the J&J shot, and states and other providers are expected to follow. The other two authorized vaccines, from Moderna and Pfizer, are not affected by the pause.

CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will meet Wednesday to discuss the cases and the FDA has also launched an investigation into the cause of the clots and low platelet counts.

“Until that process is complete, we are recommending a pause in the use of this vaccine out of an abundance of caution,” Dr. Anne Schuchat, Principal Deputy Director of the CDC and Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research said in a joint statement.

They are recommending that people who were given the J&J vaccine who are experiencing severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after receiving the shot contact their health care provider.

Officials say they also want to educate vaccine providers and health professionals about the “unique treatment” required for this type of clot.

The J&J vaccine received emergency use authorization from the FDA in late February with great fanfare, with hopes that its single-dose and relatively simple storage requirements would speed vaccinations across the country. Yet the shot only makes up a small fraction of the doses administered in the U.S. as J&J has been plagued by production delays and manufacturing errors at the Baltimore plant of a contractor.

Last week the drugmaker took over the facility to scale up production in hopes of meeting its commitment to the U.S. government of providing about 100 million doses by the end of May.

Until now concern about the unusual blood clots has centered on the vaccine from AstraZeneca, which has not yet received authorization in the U.S. Last week, European regulators said they found a possible link between the shots and a very rare type of blood clot that occurs together with low blood platelets, one that seems to occur more in younger people.

The European Medicines Agency stressed that the benefits of receiving the vaccine outweigh the risks for most people. But several countries have imposed limits on who can receive the vaccine; Britain recommended that people under 30 be offered alternatives.

But the J&J and AstraZeneca vaccines are made with the same technology. Leading COVID-19 vaccines train the body to recognize the spike protein that coats the outer surface of the coronavirus. But the J&J and AstraZeneca vaccines use a cold virus, called an adenovirus, to carry the spike gene into the body. J&J uses a human adenovirus to create its vaccine while AstraZeneca uses a chimpanzee version.

The announcement hit U.S. stock markets immediately, with Dow futures falling almost 200 points just over two hours before the opening bell. Shares of Johnson & Johnson dropped almost 3%

Iran warns sabotage could hurt Vienna talks over nuke deal

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran’s foreign minister warned Tuesday that a weekend attack on its main nuclear enrichment site at Natanz could hurt ongoing negotiations over its tattered atomic deal with world powers.

Those talks are aimed at finding a way for the United States to re-enter the agreement, the goal of which is to limit Iran’s enrichment of uranium in exchange relief on sanctions.

The U.S. has insisted it had nothing to do with Sunday’s sabotage at the Natanz nuclear facility. Instead,

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Israel is widely believed to have carried out the assault that damaged centrifuges, though it has not claimed it. But Mohammad Javad Zarif still issued a warning to Washington.

"Americans should know that neither sanctions nor sabotage actions would provide them with an instrument for talks," Zarif said in Tehran alongside visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. "They should know that these actions would only make the situation difficult for them."

Zarif separately renewed his earlier warning to Israel over the sabotage, saying that if Iran determines its archenemy was behind it, "then Israel will get its response and will see what a stupid thing it has done."

Kayhan, the hard-line Tehran newspaper, urged Iran to "walk out of the Vienna talks, suspend all nuclear commitments, retaliate against Israel and identify and dismantle the domestic infiltration network behind the sabotage."

"Despite evidence that shows the role of the U.S. as main instigator of nuclear sabotage against Iran, unfortunately some statesmen, by purging the U.S. of responsibility, (aid) Washington's crimes against the people of Iran," the paper said in Tuesday's editions.

While Kayhan is a small-circulation newspaper, its editor-in-chief, Hossein Shariatmadari, was appointed by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and has been described as an adviser to him in the past.

Such a walkout remains unlikely as the administration of President Hassan Rouhani, whose main diplomatic achievement was the 2015 accord, hopes to get the U.S. to rejoin it and provide desperately needed sanctions relief. However, pressure does appear to be growing within Iran's theocracy over how to respond to the attack.

The talks in Vienna — among Iran, world powers still in the deal and the U.S. — are aimed at reviving America's role in the agreement that former President Donald Trump abandoned and lifting the sanctions he imposed. Iran, in turn, would return to the limits set by the deal and dilute its growing stockpile of uranium — some of which has been enriched up to a short step away from weapons-grade levels.

Iran insists its nuclear program is peaceful, though the West and the International Atomic Energy Agency say Tehran had an organized military nuclear program up until the end of 2003. However, the deal prevents it from having enough of a uranium stockpile to be able to pursue a nuclear weapon.

Rouhani met later Tuesday with Lavrov and stressed the importance of all parties returning to the deal. Russia is a member of the nuclear deal.

"We are neither ready to accept less than that, nor are we after achieving more than that," he said.

Details remained scarce about what happened at Natanz. The event was initially described only as a blackout in the electrical grid feeding above-ground workshops and underground enrichment halls — but later Iranian officials began referring to it as an attack. Israeli media, which has close ties with the military and intelligence services of that country, have described the sabotage as a cyberattack, without offering evidence or sourcing to support that.

The extent of the damage at Natanz also remains unclear, though Iran's Foreign Ministry said it damaged some of Iran's first-generation IR-1 centrifuges, the workhorse of its nuclear program. A former Iranian Revolutionary Guard chief said Tuesday that the assault set off a fire while a civilian nuclear program spokesman mentioned a "possible minor explosion."

In remarks aired late Monday by state television, the former head of the country's civilian nuclear arm called the attack's design "very beautiful." It appeared to target both the power grid at Natanz, as well as the facility's emergency backup power, Fereydoun Abbasi said.

Abbasi said a similar attack targeted Iran's underground Fordo facility in 2012 with two explosions: one 30 kilometers (18.5 miles) away at a power station and the other at Fordo's emergency battery system.

"We had predicted that, and we were using a separate power grid," Abbasi said. "They hit but nothing happened for our machines."

Protest after chief says officer meant to use Taser, not gun

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (AP) — Police clashed with protesters for a second night in the Minneapolis

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suburb where an officer who authorities say apparently intended to fire a Taser, not a handgun, fatally shot a Black man during a traffic stop.

Brooklyn Center Police Chief Tim Gannon described Sunday's shooting death of 20-year-old Daunte Wright as "an accidental discharge." The shooting sparked protests and unrest in an area already on edge because of the trial of the first of four police officers charged in George Floyd's death.

Hundreds of protesters faced off against police in Brooklyn Center after nightfall Monday, and hours after a dusk-to-dawn curfew was announced by the governor. When the protesters wouldn't disperse, police began firing gas canisters and flash-bang grenades, sending clouds wafting over the crowd and chasing some protesters away. A long line of police in riot gear, rhythmically pushing their clubs in front of them, began slowly forcing back the remaining crowds.

"Move back!" the police chanted. "Hands up! Don't shoot!" the crowd chanted back.

By late Monday, only a few dozen protesters remained. There were 40 people arrested Monday night at the Brooklyn Center protest, Minnesota State Patrol Col. Matt Langer said at a news conference early Tuesday. In Minneapolis, 13 arrests were made, including for burglaries and curfew violations, police said.

Law enforcement agencies had stepped up their presence across the Minneapolis area after Sunday night violence. The number of Minnesota National Guard troops was expected to more than double to over 1,000 by Monday night.

Authorities earlier Monday released body camera footage that showed the officer shouting at Wright as police tried to arrest him.

"I'll Tase you! I'll Tase you! Taser! Taser! Taser!" she can be heard saying. She draws her weapon after the man breaks free from police outside his car and gets back behind the wheel.

After firing a single shot from her handgun, the car speeds away and the officer is heard saying, "Holy (expletive)! I shot him."

Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott called the shooting "deeply tragic" and said the officer should be fired.

"We're going to do everything we can to ensure that justice is done and our communities are made whole," he said.

Elliott later announced that the city council had voted to give his office "command authority" over the police department.

This "will streamline things and establish a chain of command and leadership," he wrote on Twitter. He also said the city manager had been fired, and that the deputy city manager would take over his duties.

The reason behind the firing was not immediately clear, but the city manager controls the police department, according to the city's charter. Now-former City Manager Curt Boganey, speaking earlier to reporters, declined to say whether he believed the officer should be fired and that she would get "due process" after the shooting.

Brooklyn Center is a modest suburb just north of Minneapolis that has seen its demographics shift dramatically in recent years. In 2000, more than 70% of the city was white. Today, a majority of residents are Black, Asian or Latino.

Elliott, the city's first Black mayor, immigrated from Liberia as a child. On Monday night, he was joined by Keith Ellison, the state's first Black attorney general, in addressing a group of protesters not far from the police department — telling the demonstrators to use their voices but remain safe.

"We are going to get to the bottom of this, we are going to make sure that there's justice, that there's officers held accountable," Elliott can be heard telling protesters on video posted by a reporter for Minneapolis television station KARE.

Ellison reminded the crowd he currently is leading the prosecution of the the first officer charged in Floyd's death, and promised Wright's death will not be "swept under the rug."

The body camera footage showed three officers around a stopped car, which authorities said was pulled over because it had expired registration tags. When another officer attempts to handcuff Wright, a second officer tells him he's being arrested on a warrant. That's when the struggle begins, followed by the shooting. Then the car travels several blocks before striking another vehicle.

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Gannon said he believed the officer had intended to use her Taser, but instead fired one bullet at Wright. From "what I viewed and the officer's reaction in distress immediately after that this was an accidental discharge that resulted in the tragic death of Mr. Wright."

Wright died of a gunshot wound to the chest, the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's office said in a statement.

The state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, which is investigating the shooting, identified the officer as Kim Potter, a 26-year veteran who has been placed on administrative leave.

Gannon would not say whether she would be fired.

"I think we can watch the video and ascertain whether she will be returning," the chief said.

Court records show Wright was being sought after failing to appear in court on charges that he fled from officers and possessed a gun without a permit during an encounter with Minneapolis police in June.

Wright's mother, Katie Wright, said her son called her as he was getting pulled over.

During the call, she said she heard scuffling and then someone saying "Daunte, don't run" before the call ended. When she called back, her son's girlfriend answered and said he had been shot.

His brother, Dallas Bryant, told about a hundred people gathered for a candlelight vigil Monday evening that Wright sounded scared during the phone call, and questioned how the officer could mistake a gun for a Taser.

"You know the difference between plastic and metal. We all know it," he said.

Demonstrators began to gather shortly after the shooting, with some jumping atop police cars. Wright's death prompted protests in other U.S. cities, including in Portland, Oregon, where police said a demonstration turned into a riot Monday night, with some in the crowd throwing rocks and other projectiles at officers.

The trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis officer charged in Floyd's death, continued Monday. Floyd, a Black man, died May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck. Prosecutors say Floyd was pinned for 9 minutes, 29 seconds. The judge in that case refused Monday to sequester the jury after a defense attorney argued that the panel could be influenced by the prospect of what might happen as a result of their verdict.

India reels amid virus surge, affecting world vaccine supply

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The Indian city of Pune is running out of ventilators as gasping coronavirus patients crowd its hospitals. Social media is full of people searching for beds, while relatives throng pharmacies looking for antiviral medicines that hospitals ran out of long ago.

The surge, which can be seen across India, is particularly alarming because the country is a major vaccine producer and a critical supplier to the U.N.-backed COVAX initiative. That program aims to bring shots to some of the world's poorest countries. Already the rise in cases has forced India to focus on satisfying its domestic demand — and delay deliveries to COVAX and elsewhere, including the United Kingdom and Canada.

India said Tuesday that it would authorize a slew of new vaccines, but experts said that the decision was unlikely to have any immediate impact on supplies available in the country. For now, its focus on domestic needs "means there is very little, if anything, left for COVAX and everybody else," said Brook Baker, a vaccines expert at Northeastern University.

Pune is India's hardest-hit city, but other major metropolises are also in crisis, as daily new infections hit record levels, and experts say that missteps stemming from the belief that the pandemic was "over" are coming back to haunt the country.

When infections began plummeting in India in September, many concluded the worst had passed. Masks and social distancing were abandoned, while the government gave mixed signals about the level of risk. When cases began rising again in February, authorities were left scrambling.

"Nobody took a long-term view of the pandemic," said Dr. Vineeta Bal, who studies immune systems at the city's Indian Institute of Science Education and Research. She noted, for instance, that instead of

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strengthening existing hospitals, temporary sites were created. In Pune, authorities are resurrecting one of those makeshift facilities, which was crucial to the city's fight against the virus last year.

India is not alone. Many countries in Europe that saw declines in cases are experiencing new surges, and infection rates have been climbing in every global region, partially driven by new virus variants.

Over the past week, India had averaged more than 143,000 cases per day. It has now reported 13.6 million virus cases since the pandemic began — pushing its toll past Brazil's and making it second only to the United States', though both countries have much smaller populations. Deaths are also rising and have crossed the 170,000 mark. Even those figures, experts say, are likely an undercount.

Nearly all states are showing an uptick in infections, and Pune — home to 4 million people — is now left with just 28 unused ventilators Monday night for its more than 110,000 COVID-19 patients.

The country now faces the mammoth challenge of vaccinating millions of people, while also contact-tracing the tens of thousands getting infected every day and keeping the health system from collapsing.

Dilnaz Boga has been in and out of hospitals in recent months to visit a sick relative and witnessed the shift firsthand as cases began to rise. Beds were suddenly unavailable. Nurses warned visitors to be careful. Posters that advised proper mask-wearing sprang up everywhere.

And then, earlier this month, Boga and her 80-year-old mother tested positive. Doctors suggested that her mother be hospitalized, but there weren't any beds available initially. Both she and her mother are now recovering.

Compounding concerns about rising cases is the fact that the country's vaccination drive could also be headed for trouble: Several Indian states have reported a shortage of doses even as the federal government has insisted there's enough in stock.

After a sluggish start, India recently overtook the United States in the number of shots it's giving every day and is now averaging 3.6 million. But with more than four times the number of people and that later start, it has given at least one dose to around just 7% of its population.

India's western Maharashtra state, home to Pune and financial capital Mumbai, has recorded nearly half of the country's new infections in the past week. Some vaccination centers in the state turned away people due to shortages.

At least half a dozen Indian states are reporting similarly low stocks, but Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has called these concerns "deplorable attempts by some state governments to distract attention from their failures."

Still, India moved Tuesday to expand the number of vaccines available, by authorizing the use of all coronavirus shots that have been given an emergency nod by the World Health Organization or regulators in the United States, Europe, Britain or Japan. Indian regulators also OK'd Russia's Sputnik V for emergency use.

Worries about vaccine supplies have led to criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which has exported 64.5 million doses to other nations. Rahul Gandhi, the face of the main opposition Congress party, asked Modi in a letter whether the government's export strategy was "an effort to garner publicity at the cost of our own citizens."

Now, India has reversed course. Last month, COVAX said shipments of up to 90 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccines were delayed because the Serum Institute of India decided to prioritize domestic needs.

The institute, which is based in Pune and is the world's largest vaccine maker, told The Associated Press earlier this month that it could restart exports of the vaccine by June — if new coronavirus infections subside. But a continued surge could result in more delays.

And experts warn that India could be looking at just that.

They suspect the most likely cause behind the widespread surge is the presence of more infectious variants, including a new and potentially troublesome variant that was first detected in India itself.

India needs to vaccinate faster and increase measures aimed at stopping the virus's spread, said Krishna Udayakumar, founding director of the Duke Global Health Innovation Center at Duke University. "The coming months in India are extremely dangerous," he said.

Yet, some say the government's confused messaging have failed to communicate the risk.

Modi has noted the need for people to wear masks, but over the last few weeks, while on the campaign

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trail, he has delivered speeches in front of tens of thousands of mask-less supporters.

The federal government has also allowed huge gatherings during Hindu festivals like the Kumbh Mela, where millions of devotees daily take a holy dip into the Ganges river. In response to concerns that it could turn into a "superspreader" event, the state's chief minister, Tirath Singh Rawat, said "the faith in God will overcome the fear of the virus."

"Optics are so important, and we are completely messing it up," said Dr. Shahid Jameel, who studies viruses at India's Ashoka University.

Dozens of cities and towns have imposed partial restrictions and nighttime curfews to try to curb infections, but Modi has ruled out the possibility of another nationwide lockdown. He also rejected calls from states to offer vaccinations to younger people.

Experts, meanwhile, say the current limit of offering vaccine to those over 45 should be relaxed and that shots need to be targeted in areas experiencing surges.

"The burden of COVID-19 is being felt unevenly," said Udayakumar. "And the response needs to be tailored to local needs."

Biden aims for bipartisanship but applies sly pressure

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has begun publicly courting Republicans to back his sweeping infrastructure plan, but his reach across the aisle is intended just as much to keep Democrats in line as it is a first step in an uphill climb to any bipartisan deal.

Biden's high-profile Oval Office meeting with a bipartisan group of lawmakers on Monday was just one piece of a fulsome attempt to win over GOP lawmakers, White House aides said. But even if it doesn't succeed, it could prove useful — boxing in Republicans while helping keep the widely disparate Democrats in line. Some moderate Democrats, notably Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, have urged an effort at bipartisanship to pass the \$2.3 trillion bill.

And while Biden has made clear, publicly and privately, that he wants Republican support, the White House is also preparing to go it alone, if necessary, to get the bill passed. That would leave the GOP in the politically unpopular position of explaining why it objected to investments many Americans want.

"I'm prepared to negotiate as to the extent of my infrastructure project, as well as how we pay for it," Biden said during Monday's meeting with lawmakers. "Everyone acknowledges we need a significant increase in infrastructure."

Biden dismissed the idea his outreach to Republicans is just for show, proclaiming, "I'm not big on window dressing, as you've observed."

In fact, lawmakers left the White House meeting with the understanding that Biden was open to discussion and the president's team was headed to Capitol Hill to meet with them or any other representatives, as soon as Tuesday.

"Those are all the exact words that I wanted to hear going into the meeting," Republican Rep. Garret Graves of Louisiana, a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And so that was really encouraging."

Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., offered, "Nobody stormed out yelling 'no.'"

The White House outreach has been significant, with Cabinet members and allies meeting with lawmakers and activists while also fanning out across the country to sell the plan directly to voters. Officials said that Biden would hold more bipartisan gatherings this month and that top administration officials have meetings planned with more than a dozen congressional committees this week.

But most Republicans have made it clear they have little interest, for now, in joining the effort, rejecting the idea of increasing the corporate tax rate to pay for it. And they have lambasted the proposal as big spending, preferring to stand by and leave Biden to pursue his priority legislation on his own.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has said the entire package would need to be redone, "completely recrafted," to bring on Republicans. And Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, the top Republican on

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the Commerce Committee, who was in Monday's meeting, said afterward that "clearly there are parts of this program that are non-starters for Republicans."

Undoing the 2017 GOP tax breaks "would be an almost impossible sell," Wicker told reporters on Capitol Hill.

Wicker said he told Biden just that in the meeting and characterized the president's response: "Well, he disagrees."

But the White House has expressed confidence that voters won't be sympathetic to a defense that corporations object to their tax rates being raised from 21% to 28% at the expense of broadly popular funding for highways, subways, water pipes, broadband and more.

Cedric Richmond, the White House director of public engagement, said the outreach to lawmakers and business leaders alike has benefited from Biden being perceived as an honest broker who is straightforward with his intentions. Richmond has also stressed to the companies that the 21% rate established by President Donald Trump's 2017 tax cut was above and beyond what they had requested.

"Not one business in six years ever mentioned 21%," Richmond said. "What I'm reminding them of is we would be bringing the rate back to the neighborhood they wanted in the first place. And at the same time, we could fix infrastructure."

Congress has launched the long slog of legislating, with multiple paths for bringing the package forward for votes.

Democrats hold the slimmest of majorities in Congress, a three-vote margin in the House and an evenly split 50-50 Senate that leaves no room for error as Biden tries to keep party aligned. The party's vice president, Kamala Harris, can provide a tie-breaking vote in the Senate.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has set a July 4 goal for action, but even that seems politically ambitious in the face of the daunting challenges ahead. And for every move the White House makes to win over centrists, including Manchin and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, they risk losing liberals like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., who wants Biden to reach for an even larger package to meet the nation's needs.

One option Democrats are considering is the so-called budget reconciliation process, which would allow for passage on a 51-vote majority in the Senate, rather than the 60 votes typically needed to overcome a Republican filibuster.

Manchin, in particular, has expressed some queasiness at using reconciliation without an attempt at bipartisanship, making him as much an audience for the White House's outreach as Republicans. He and others have resisted efforts to change the filibuster rules, but West Wing aides believe that he would be inclined to support reconciliation if he saw that Republicans were stonewalling an attempt at bipartisanship.

"This is another moment to showcase that the Republicans simply want to obstruct all of the Biden agenda," said Dan Pfeiffer, former senior adviser to President Barack Obama. "And the American people want to see you try to be bipartisan but not at the expense of things you support."

Citing his four decades in Washington, Biden campaigned as a bipartisan deal-maker. But Republicans have, to this point, uniformly rejected his efforts. Not a single GOP lawmaker voted for the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill that Biden signed into law last month despite polling that suggested the measure was popular among Republican voters.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Biden's outreach was sincere: "You don't use the president of the United States' time multiple times over, including two infrastructure meetings, if he did not want to authentically hear from the members attending about their ideas about how to move forward this package in a bipartisan manner."

The West Wing has also pointed to polling that suggests a bipartisan appetite among voters for infrastructure spending, and Biden plans to unveil a second part — focused on health and family care — in the coming weeks. The White House has telegraphed that far more of this package is open to negotiation than was the case with the COVID-19 bill, but it also set a Memorial Day deadline for showing progress.

"Democrats have set up a proactive effort to make it hard for Republicans to stand and cut the ribbon at a transportation project in their district if they didn't vote for it," said Kevin Madden, senior adviser to Republican Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign. "That's their effort to pressure Republicans. Can

Republicans as a party now keep the same level of unity to oppose it?"

Japan to start releasing Fukushima water into sea in 2 years

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's government announced Tuesday it would start releasing treated radioactive water from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean in two years. It's a move that's fiercely opposed by fishermen, residents and Japan's neighbors.

The decision, long speculated at but delayed for years because of safety worries and protests, came during a meeting of Cabinet ministers who endorsed the ocean release as the best option.

The accumulating water has been stored in tanks at the Fukushima Daiichi plant since 2011, when a massive earthquake and tsunami damaged its reactors and their cooling water became contaminated and began leaking. The plant's storage capacity will be full late next year.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said the ocean release was the most realistic option and that disposing the water is needed to complete the decades-long decommissioning of the Fukushima plant. He said the government would work to make sure the water is safe and to help local agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

The plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., and government officials say tritium, which is not harmful in small amounts, cannot be removed from the water, but all other selected radionuclides can be reduced to releasable levels. Some scientists say the long-term impact on marine life from low-dose exposure to such large volumes of water is unknown.

The government stresses the water's safety, calling it "treated" not "radioactive," even though radionuclides can only be reduced to disposable levels, not to zero. The amount of radioactive material that would remain in the water is unknown.

Releasing the water into the ocean was described as the most realistic solution by a government panel that for nearly seven years had discussed how to dispose of the water. The report last year mentioned evaporation as a less desirable option.

Under the basic plan adopted Tuesday by the ministers, TEPCO will start releasing the water in about two years after building a facility and compiling release plans that follow safety requirements. It said the disposal of the water cannot be postponed further and is necessary to improve the environment surrounding the plant so residents can live there safely.

Residents, fisheries officials and environmental groups issued statements denouncing the decision as ignoring environmental safety and health, and further hurting Fukushima's image and economy.

Japan Fisheries Cooperatives chairman Hiroshi Kishi said the decision less than a week after he met with Suga "trampled on" all Japanese fisheries operators.

Local fisheries have just returned to full operation after a decade in which their catch was only for testing purposes, and they are struggling because of dwindling demand.

Protestors gathered outside the Prime Minister's Office to demand the plan be scrapped.

TEPCO says its water storage capacity of 1.37 million tons will be full around fall of 2022. Also, the area now filled with storage tanks needs to be used for new buildings needed for removing melted fuel debris from inside the reactors and for other decommissioning work in coming years.

In the decade since the tsunami disaster, water meant to cool the nuclear material has constantly escaped from the damaged primary containment vessels into the basements of the reactor buildings. To make up for the loss, more water has been pumped into the reactors to continue to cool the melted fuel. Water is also pumped out and treated, part of which is recycled as cooling water, and the remainder stored in 1,020 tanks now holding 1.25 million tons of radioactive water.

Those tanks, which occupy a large space at the plant, interfere with the safe and steady progress of the decommissioning, Economy and Industry Minister Hiroshi Kajiyama said. The tanks also could be damaged and leak in case of another powerful earthquake or tsunami, the report said.

About 70% of the water in the tanks is contaminated beyond discharge limits but will be filtered again

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and diluted with seawater before it is released, the report says. According to a preliminary estimate, gradual release of the water will take nearly 40 years but will be completed before the plant is fully decommissioned.

IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, in a video message, said the ocean discharge was in line with international practice, though "the large amount of water at the Fukushima plant makes it a unique and complex case."

China and South Korea reacted strongly to Tuesday's decision.

Koo Yun-cheol, minister of South Korea's Office for Government Policy Coordination, said the plan was "absolutely unacceptable" and urged Japan to disclose how the water is treated and its safety is verified. South Korea has banned seafood imports from parts of Japan since 2013 and could increase those steps.

China criticized Japan's decision as "extremely irresponsible," saying it had not considered the health concerns of neighboring countries.

Congress to honor 2nd Capitol Police officer slain this year

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Slain U.S. Capitol Police Officer William "Billy" Evans will lie in honor in the Capitol Rotunda on Tuesday during the second such memorial ceremony this year for a force that has edged close to crisis in the wake of the Jan. 6 insurrection.

President Joe Biden and congressional leaders will attend a midday ceremony for Evans, 41, who was killed April 2 when a vehicle rammed into him and another officer at a barricade just 100 yards (91 meters) from the Senate side of the Capitol. The driver, Noah Green, 25, came out of the car with a knife and was shot to death by police. Investigators believe Green had been delusional and increasingly having suicidal thoughts.

Evans' death came just three months after a violent mob of President Donald Trump's supporters blew past security barricades and attacked the Capitol, injuring dozens of Capitol Police officers. Officer Brian Sicknick died after engaging with the rioters, though officials do not yet know exactly what caused his death. Two men have been arrested and charged with assaulting him with bear spray.

Sicknick and Evans are two of only six Capitol Police officers who have been killed in the line of duty in the force's nearly 200-year history, according to the department. Another officer, Howard Liebengood, died by suicide in the days after Jan. 6.

The three deaths in as many months have taken an unbearable toll on the force, which has been overworked and understaffed as leaders try to figure out how to move forward after the mistakes of Jan. 6. The Capitol Police were massively unprepared for the hundreds of violent Trump supporters who pushed past them that day, injuring them as they broke into the building. In the weeks and months since, top leaders have resigned and many have considered leaving the department. Officials have brought in trauma therapists, and lawmakers are considering what more they can do.

"This is a group of men and women who've been through an overwhelming amount of trauma over the last few months," said Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, who heads a spending committee that oversees the Capitol Police and has been investigating the response to the insurrection. "The loss of Officer Evans is yet another stark reminder of what our brothers and sisters in uniform risk every day to protect us. The honor of lying in state under the Capitol dome is befitting of this American hero."

Lawmakers, family and members of the police force will be invited to pay their respects to Evans after the ceremony with Biden and congressional leaders. He will be only the sixth person to lie in honor in the Capitol Rotunda, a designation for those who are not elected officials, judges or military leaders.

Evans, who had two young children, was an 18-year veteran of the force. He was remembered by colleagues and friends as a man with a sense of humor who loved baseball and golf.

Members of his family said in a statement through the police earlier this month that most important in his life were his two children, Logan and Abigail.

"His most cherished moments were those spent with them — building with Lego, having lightsaber duels, playing board games, doing arts and crafts, and recently finishing the Harry Potter series," the family said.

"He was always so eager to show how proud he was of everything they did."

The family said Evans was proud of his job and his friendship with colleagues near the "North Barricade" of the Capitol complex was one of the best parts of it.

"We hold them in our hearts, as we know they acutely share our grief," they said.

Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said on the Senate floor Monday evening that Evans was a "familiar and friendly face" at that barricade where he died, a gate that is frequently used by senators and staff. Durbin said the three deaths this year are an "incredible hardship" for the department and Congress owes them a debt that can never be repaid.

"Every day it is incumbent on those of us who work in this building to remember this officer, and to thank him, and the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police who have given so much to keep us safe," Durbin said.

Rep. Jennifer Wexton, D-Va., who represented Liebengood and has gotten to know his family since his suicide, has worked to find more mental health resources for the Capitol Police as they have worked extra shifts and dealt with the trauma of losing their colleagues. She said the current pace for the force is unsustainable.

"We've lost officers to this level of stress and as we approach the second laying in honor of a Capitol police officer this year, I fear an exodus is approaching if we don't prioritize the mental and physical health of our Capitol police officers," Wexton said.

Canary Islands hotel offers shelter to migrants in need

By RENATA BRITO Associated Press

PUERTO RICO DE GRAN CANARIA, Spain (AP) — When hotel director Calvin Lucock and restaurant owner Unn Tove Saetran said goodbye to one of the last groups of migrants staying in one of the seaside resorts they manage in Spain's Canary Islands, the British-Norwegian couple didn't know when they would have guests again.

They had initially lost their tourism clientele to the coronavirus pandemic, but then things had taken an unexpected turn.

A humanitarian crisis was unfolding on the archipelago where tens of thousands of African men, women and children were arriving on rudimentary boats. The Spanish government — struggling to accommodate 23,000 people who disembarked on the islands in 2020 — contracted hundreds of hotel rooms left empty due to the coronavirus travel restrictions.

The deal not only helped migrants and asylum-seekers have a place to sleep, it also allowed Lucock to keep most of his hotel staff employed.

But the contract ended in February and thousands of people were transferred out of the hotels and into newly built large-scale migrant camps. Or so they thought.

"We realized that we had a queue of people standing outside when we closed the doors," said Saetran, a former teacher, in a recent interview with The Associated Press at the Holiday Club Puerto Calma in southern Gran Canaria.

Some of the "boys," as she calls them, had ended up on the streets after being expelled from government-funded reception centers. Others had chosen to leave the official system fearing overcrowded camps and forced returns to the countries they fled from. With the rooms still empty, Saetran said she couldn't sleep knowing the migrants would be left on the street.

So they reopened the hotel doors again, this time at their own expense.

"They were very scared, they didn't have anywhere to go, and there wasn't any other solution," said Saetran who has lived in the Canary Islands with Lucock since the '90s and has a Spanish-born daughter.

Today, the family, with the help of some of the hotel staff and other volunteers, provide food through Saetran's restaurant, shelter through the hotel and care to 58 young men, including eight unaccompanied minors, mainly from Morocco and Senegal as well as other West African countries, who fell out of the official migrant reception and integration system for one reason or another.

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One of them is Fode Top, a 28-year-old Senegalese fisherman who left his country in search of better work in Europe last November. The fish in Senegal, he says, have disappeared from the ocean following years of industrial fishing by Chinese and European vessels. Nowadays one can hardly make a living being a fisherman.

To make matters worse, Top's 3-year-old son needed life-saving and expensive heart surgery. To pay medical bills, Top borrowed money he wasn't able to pay back, resulting in threats.

"If I return to Senegal I will have problems. Many problems," Top said.

The official camps have also been plagued with problems, with reports of overcrowding, insufficient food, unsanitary conditions and lack of legal and medical assistance. Most recently, police intervened with rubber bullets in the largest camp on the island of Tenerife after a fight broke out between two groups of residents.

The Canary Islands and their year-round sunny beaches normally attract millions of northern European tourists each year. But for the migrants at Puerto Calma, staying in the hotel is no vacation. The islands were just meant to be a stepping stone toward stability, security and employment in continental Europe, not their final destination. Today, it is a place of limbo for thousands who were denied access to the Spanish peninsula and live in waiting, unable to work and send money back to their families.

"They've come here looking for a better life, one of the reasons I came to Spain," said 47-year-old Lucock. There's only one difference: "They are not born with a European passport so they can't travel in the same way I can."

On a recent evening, as they ate dinner, Saetran got a text message: Six young men, including alleged minors, had been sleeping in the streets of Las Palmas for days. She looked at her husband, who runs the hotel, for approval. He rolled his eyes and took a deep breath.

The next day, the six boys arrived at the hotel carrying their belongings in plastic bags. Saetran and Lucock welcomed them and gave them two rooms. Both of them know the hotel won't be able to shelter migrants forever, but for now they have a place to sleep.

"If we can play a small part in making them feel safe and secure while they are here, then I feel like we've achieved something," Lucock said.

As the men wait month after month to either move north or be returned south, Lucock and Saetran try to keep them busy. Volunteers come three times a week to give English and Spanish classes. The athletic ones play soccer on the beach or run up the mountain with locals. There's also a lot of checkers and card games.

The couple says they hope to continue helping young migrants even after tourism kicks off again, and are setting up a charity.

"In our culture we have so much that we forget to appreciate the small things," Saetran said.

Prince Philip shaped, and was shaped by, a century of tumult

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Born into an age of revolutions in the wake of a pandemic, Prince Philip lived through a tumultuous century and worked to make the British monarchy a rock of stability in changing times.

He bore witness to — and participated in — many of the century's upheavals: World War II, the dismantling of the British Empire and the rise and fall of nations during and after the Cold War.

He helped anchor the monarchy with his wife, Queen Elizabeth II, but died last week at 99 with the United Kingdom still unsettled by its exit from the European Union, and in a world of growing nationalism and extremes.

"His life started in a moment of crisis, ended in a moment of crisis, and, of course, saw a great deal of crisis throughout that long life," said Margaret MacMillan, professor emerita of international history at Oxford University.

Philip was born in Corfu as a prince of Greece and Denmark. When he was a toddler, his family had to flee Greece after a coup. Monarchies across Europe were being toppled as societies faced upheaval in

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the aftermath of World War I and the deadly influenza pandemic that followed.

His grandfather, King George of Greece, had been assassinated eight years before Philip's birth, and his royal Romanov relatives in Russia were slain after the czar's abdication and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

"It was a time when a lot of what had seemed like very stable institutions and countries were simply disappearing," MacMillan said. "There was a lot of fear that what had happened in Russia was going to spread around the world."

Historian Ed Owens said Philip's early years "are key to informing how he sees monarchy for the rest of his life."

He said Philip saw monarchy "as something that isn't necessarily permanent, that must be kept popular."

Raised by relatives in Britain, Philip joined the Royal Navy and saw action in World War II on battleships in the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean and the Pacific. European royalty found itself divided by the war: Two of Philip's sisters had German husbands who served on the Nazi side.

He had a ringside seat for the end of the conflict. Philip's ship was in Tokyo Bay for the formal Japanese surrender aboard USS Missouri on Sept. 2, 1945, and he watched the ceremony through binoculars.

In 1947, Philip married Britain's Princess Elizabeth, who as the elder daughter of King George VI was destined to be queen.

British historian Simon Schama said that coming from "a Europe where nothing seemed stable," Philip embraced the solidity offered by Britain's monarchy and its role as neutral pillar of public life, above the political fray.

"When he found his way into British life ... he wasn't just embracing a royal family, he was embracing an institution, that of constitutional monarchy," Schama told the BBC.

When Elizabeth became queen at age 25 in 1952, Philip gave up his naval career and dedicated himself to supporting her.

Britain, though victorious in the war, was an indebted and declining power whose colonies were breaking free. Philip helped create the Commonwealth group of nations, with the queen at its head, to try to bind Britain and its former colonies together on a more equal footing.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland said in a tribute that Philip sought to bring the "camaraderie and comradeship" he had experienced as a wartime sailor into relations between countries, "so that they would reap the dividends of collaboration in peacetime too."

The royal couple covered 40,000 miles touring the Commonwealth in 1953, the first of many trips to the organization's now 54 member nations.

"His Royal Highness had a farsighted understanding of the potential of Commonwealth connection, and his approaches to bringing people together from a wide range of backgrounds to develop leadership skills were regarded as innovative and brave," Scotland said.

In Britain, Philip helped steer the monarchy through decades of declining social deference into a mass-media world where people demand intimacy from their icons.

He was instrumental in ensuring the queen's coronation was televised. Many British families bought TV sets just for the occasion, and it became the country's first mass television spectacle.

"Very early on, he saw the ... positive benefits of mass media as a way of enhancing the monarchy's public image," Owens said.

"There's been a lot of talk about Philip as quite a sort of old-fashioned presence, certainly at the end of his life. But actually, from the moment he becomes a British royal in 1947, he's a real modernizing force."

Philip was also an early environmentalist and a champion of technology. Prime Minister Boris Johnson noted Monday that Philip was "one of the first people in this country to use a mobile phone." In his late 90s, he was making Zoom calls on a laptop, according to his grandson, Prince Harry.

The decades brought family troubles, played out in public: the divorces of three of Philip and the queen's four children; the death of Princess Diana in 1997; Prince Andrew's friendship with Jeffrey Epstein, an American financier who died in a New York prison in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges; and the self-exile of Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, amid allegations of racism both from the media

and within the royal household.

Yet almost 70 years after Elizabeth became queen, she is a beloved figure — the only monarch most Britons have known — and republicanism is favored by a small minority in the country. The monarchy appears to be safe.

But with Britain facing an uneasy new relationship with its European neighbors, Scottish nationalists pushing for an independence vote and Brexit shaking the peace process in Northern Ireland, the future of both crown and country is uncertain. The queen is 94, and some day will be succeeded by her son, Prince Charles, a far less-popular royal.

"There's the issue of the royal family — what's its future? Then there's the issue of Britain — what's its future?" MacMillan said. "I think there's now a big question about the future of the international order. Are we seeing a period of transition?"

"Philip's life bookends that great moment of transition at the end of the First World War and, perhaps, a really big moment of transition in the aftermath of the Cold War."

Muslims mark Ramadan amid virus surge and renewed curbs

By AMR NABIL and NINIEK KARMINI Associated Press

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Muslims in many parts of the world marked the start of Ramadan on Tuesday, but a spike in coronavirus cases in several countries has once again put curbs on the holy month's signature feasts and lengthy prayers in mosques.

Still, there are glimmers that Ramadan 2021 could feel less restricted than last year, when Islam's holiest period coincided with the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Mosques have since reopened and limits on movement have eased as vaccine rollouts continue in Muslim-majority nations. Clerics in such places as Indonesia have issued assurances the vaccine does not break one's daytime fast.

Ramadan is marked by longer prayers, dawn-to-dusk fasting and nightly feasts with family and friends, though crowded shoulder-to-shoulder gatherings in mosques and large gatherings for meals remain prohibited due to the continued spread of coronavirus globally.

Throughout Ramadan, Muslims abstain from any food or drink - including water - from morning to night. The month-long practice is aimed at heightening remembrance of God, curbing unhealthy habits and deepening gratitude.

In Mecca, home to the Kaaba - Islam's most sacred site - Muslims performed socially distanced "taraweeh" prayers, marking the start of Ramadan. Observant Muslims around the world pray toward the Kaaba five times a day.

Only limited numbers of worshippers are being allowed inside the Grand Mosque that houses the Kaaba in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus. Saudi authorities are only allowing individuals who've been vaccinated or recently recovered from the virus to perform taraweeh prayers at the Kaaba.

In Lebanon, most Muslims began Ramadan on Tuesday amid soaring inflation. The small country is in the grips of the worst economic and financial crisis in its modern history, with the Lebanese currency losing some 80% of its value against the U.S. dollar in past months.

The crisis - a result of decades of endemic corruption and mismanagement - has been compounded by the coronavirus pandemic. Many people are having to scale back their Ramadan preparations.

"We cannot buy anything. We ask how much the lettuce is, the cucumber and the tomato," said Samiyeh al-Turk at a busy open air market in Beirut Monday. "How we are going to get through the month of Ramadan? I don't know," she added.

In Iraq, a curfew will remain in place from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. throughout Ramadan, with total lockdown on weekends. The Health Ministry warned that non-compliance with these measures could lead to three-day continuous lockdowns. Citing economic concerns for business owners, restaurants and pastry shops will be able to operate but solely through home deliveries.

Meanwhile, a 10-day lockdown due to increased infections went into effect on Tuesday in northeastern areas of Syria controlled by U.S.-backed fighters. The region, which borders Iraq and Turkey, is home to

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5 million people.

In Indonesia, COVID-19 cases are also spiking. Mosques are being allowed to open for Ramadan prayers with strict protocols in place.

The government will allow people to hold "iftar" gatherings during Ramadan in restaurants, malls and cafes, which can open at 50% capacity. Iftar is the sought-after moment when Muslims traditionally break their daylong fast by eating dates and taking a sip of water before feasting with friends and family.

"Easing restrictions is like a breath of fresh air for us who are tired by this COVID-19 outbreak," said Anna Mardiyastuti, a resident in Indonesia's capital of Jakarta. "Yes, they should act to stop the virus, but not block the door to worship or change our tradition of Ramadan entirely."

In neighboring Muslim-majority Malaysia, Wan Noradriana Balqis, 21, welcomed the return of community prayers in mosques but said she will avoid busy Ramadan bazaars. Coronavirus cases in Malaysia have more than tripled since January.

"I don't think it's a good idea to reopen the bazaars. The rules are there but many people don't follow them," the database administrative officer said.

Vaccinations pose a challenge for Muslim nations administering shots throughout Ramadan. Officials are working to ease concerns over the Islamic teaching that Muslims should refrain "from anything entering the body" between sunrise and sunset.

Indonesia's top clerical council went so far as to say Muslims eligible for vaccinations are "required" to take the shots during Ramadan.

Governments, meanwhile, are also working to uphold some restrictions.

In India, where infections have peaked in recent days, scholars are appealing to the country's 200 million Muslims to follow anti-virus protocols and refrain from large gatherings. Many Indian cities dealing with virus surges have imposed nighttime curfews, and it remains unclear whether the faithful will be allowed to perform taraweeh prayers in mosques.

In Pakistan and Iran, fasting is expected to begin Wednesday.

The government of Prime Minister Imran Khan has refused to close mosques in Pakistan, even as new infections reach levels similar to the start of the pandemic. Mosque leaders are entrusted with ensuring no one over 50 years-old enters and that social distancing is maintained, but rarely do adherents follow these restrictions.

Muslims in Indian-controlled Kashmir continue to suffer from two back-to-back lockdowns that left tens of thousands without any means to earn their livelihoods. The disputed region, the only part of Hindu-dominated India that is majority Muslim, was under an unprecedented military lockdown in 2019 before coronavirus lockdowns were imposed last year. Local charities plan to distribute Ramadan ration kits for families in need.

Meanwhile, in the North African Spanish enclave of Ceuta, where around half the population is Muslim, a peaceful protest was staged to urge authorities to push back the 10 p.m. curfew by an hour during Ramadan. Other Muslims, however, said they supported the current curfew as an important measure to protecting people's lives.

And in Egypt, the government prevented mosques from serving free meals during Ramadan and banned traditional charitable iftars that would bring together strangers at long tables.

Biden wants infrastructure deal, but GOP doubts persist

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden wants Congress to know he's sincere about cutting a deal on infrastructure, but Republican lawmakers have deep-seated doubts about the scope of his proposed package, its tax hikes and Biden's premise that this is an inflection point for the U.S. as a world power.

Biden met Monday afternoon with a bipartisan group of lawmakers and tried to assure them that the Oval Office gathering was not "window dressing." One of the core disputes is over what counts as infrastructure in his \$2.3 trillion proposal.

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"I'm prepared to negotiate as to the extent of my infrastructure project, as well as how we pay for it," Biden said. "It's going to get down to what we call 'infrastructure.'"

Republican Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi indicated after the meeting that he was willing to negotiate with Biden and called it a "good discussion." But a more fundamental disagreement also emerged about whether the United States is losing its status atop the global economy because of its deteriorating infrastructure.

"He says that we're a declining superpower, the United States is no longer No. 1," Wicker said afterward. "I just fundamentally disagree with that."

The meeting came as the Biden's team is making a direct argument for lawmakers to put their constituents ahead of their ideologies. The White House released state-by-state breakdowns Monday that show the dire shape of roads, bridges, the power grid and housing affordability, among other issues. An appeal to the broader public is unlikely to resonate much with Republican lawmakers who have already blasted the plan.

Among the Republicans at the meeting were Sen. Deb Fischer of Nebraska and Reps. Garret Graves of Louisiana and Don Young of Alaska. Democrats attending were Sens. Maria Cantwell of Washington and Sen. Alex Padilla of California and Reps. Donald Payne Jr. of New Jersey and David Price of North Carolina.

In the room, "nobody said we didn't need infrastructure investment," Cantwell, the chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said in an interview.

The lawmakers said Biden will seek to drive a consensus by having his team revisit with them and others, as soon as Tuesday.

Graves said the president talked about how he was open to discussion and open to negotiation on the size, scope and definition of infrastructure.

"Those are all the exact words that I wanted to hear going into the meeting. And so that was really encouraging," Graves, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, told The Associated Press. "Is this truly going to be a two-way discussion where we talk about better ways to deliver infrastructure, what the appropriate size and scope are, ways of funding, things like that?"

The figures in the state summaries paint a decidedly bleak outlook for the world's largest economy after years of repairs being deferred and delayed. They suggest that too much infrastructure is unsafe for vehicles at any speed, while highlighting the costs of extreme weather events that have become more frequent with climate change as well as dead spots for broadband and a dearth of child care options.

Drawn from an array of private and public data, the state reports show there are 7,300 miles (11,748 kilometers) of highway in Michigan alone that are in poor condition. Damaged streets in North Carolina impose an average yearly cost of \$500 on motorists. Iowa has 4,571 bridges in need of repair. There is a roughly 4-in-10 chance that a public transit vehicle in Indiana might be ready for the scrap yard. Pennsylvania's schools are short \$1.4 billion for maintenance and upgrades.

Most states received a letter grade on their infrastructure. West Virginia earned a D. So did Biden's home state of Delaware. Of the states rated, the highest grade went to Georgia and Utah, which each notched a C-plus. The lowest grade, D-minus, went to the territory of Puerto Rico.

The administration is banking that the data will confirm the everyday experiences of Americans as they bump over potholes, get trapped in traffic jams and wait for buses that almost never correspond to published schedules. There is already a receptive audience to the sales pitch, and the strategy is that public support can overcome any congressional misgivings.

"We don't have a lot of work to do to persuade the American people that U.S. infrastructure needs major improvement," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said on Fox News Channel's "Fox News Sunday" ahead of the reports' release. "The American people already know it."

Republican lawmakers have been quick to reject the infrastructure proposal from Biden. They say just a fraction of the spending goes to traditional infrastructure, as \$400 billion would expand Medicaid support for caregivers and substantial portions would fund electric vehicle charging stations and address the racial injustice of highways that were built in ways that destroyed Black neighborhoods.

The reports give some data to back up their argument that more money should be spent on roads and

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bridges. Biden's plan would modernize 20,000 miles (32,187 kilometers) worth of roadways, but California by itself has 14,220 miles (22,885 kilometers) of highway in poor condition.

Republican lawmakers also object to funding the package by increasing the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28% and increasing the global minimum tax, among other tax changes including stepped-up IRS enforcement being proposed by the Biden administration.

"This plan would impose the biggest tax hikes in a generation when workers need an economic recovery. It would gut right-to-work protections for blue-collar workers," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said in a Monday floor speech. "It would throw hundreds of billions at the far-left's 'green' fads."

Yet the state-by-state reports make clear that many of the people in Mississippi that Wicker represents could benefit from the package, an aspect of the Biden effort to engender the backing of voters across party lines.

Mississippi needs \$4.8 billion for drinking water and \$289 million for schools. Nearly a quarter of households lack an internet subscription, and a similar percentage lives in areas without broadband. Mississippians who use public transportation have to devote an extra 87.7% of their time to commuting.

Mississippi's infrastructure received a grade of D-plus.

Defense set to take turn in ex-cop's trial in Floyd death

By AMY FORLITI, STEVE KARNOWSKI and TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The defense for a former Minneapolis police officer charged in George Floyd's death was set to start presenting its case Tuesday, following 11 days of a prosecution narrative that combined wrenching video with clinical analysis by medical and use-of-force experts to condemn Derek Chauvin's actions.

Prosecutors called their final witnesses Monday, leaving only some administrative matters before they were expected to rest Tuesday. Once the defense takes over, Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson is expected to have his own experts testify that it was Floyd's drug use and bad heart, not Chauvin's actions, that killed him.

The defense hasn't said whether Chauvin will take the stand.

Prosecutors effectively wrapped up their case with George Floyd's younger brother, alternately smiling and tearing up as he recalled Floyd, followed by another look at the harrowing video and testimony from a use-of-force expert who said Chauvin's actions were clearly unreasonable.

Seth Stoughton, a professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law, judged Chauvin's actions against what a reasonable police officer in the same situation would have done, and repeatedly found that Chauvin did not meet the test.

"No reasonable officer would have believed that that was an appropriate, acceptable or reasonable use of force," Stoughton said of the way Floyd was held facedown with a knee across his neck for up to 9 minutes, 29 seconds.

He said, too, that the failure to roll Floyd over and render aid "as his increasing medical distress became obvious" was unreasonable.

He said it was unreasonable as well to think that Floyd might harm officers or escape after he had been handcuffed to the ground. And in yet another blow to Chauvin's defense, Stoughton said a reasonable officer would not have viewed the yelling bystanders as a threat.

The matter of what is reasonable carries great weight: Police officers are allowed certain latitude to use deadly force when someone puts the officer or other people in danger. But legal experts say a key question for the jury will be whether Chauvin's actions were reasonable in those specific circumstances.

On cross-examination, Nelson questioned Stoughton's opinion that putting Floyd on his stomach in the first place was itself unreasonable and excessive.

"Reasonable minds can disagree, agreed?" Nelson asked.

"On this particular point, no," the witness said.

Earlier Monday, Philonise Floyd, 39, took the witness stand and lovingly recalled how his older brother used to make the best banana mayonnaise sandwiches, how George drilled him in catching a football, and

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the way George used to mark his height on the wall as a boy because he wanted to grow taller.

He shed tears as he was shown a picture of his late mother and a young George, saying, "I miss both of them."

His testimony at Chauvin's murder trial was part of an effort by prosecutors to humanize George Floyd in front of the jury and make the 46-year-old Black man more than a crime statistic. Minnesota is a rarity in allowing "spark of life" testimony during the trial stage.

Philonise Floyd described growing up in a poor area of Houston with George and their other siblings.

He said Floyd played football and deliberately threw the ball at different angles so Philonise would have to practice diving for it. "I always thought my brother couldn't throw. But he never intended to throw the ball to me," he said, smiling.

Earlier Monday, Judge Peter Cahill rejected a defense request to immediately sequester the jury, the morning after the killing of a Black man during a traffic stop triggered unrest in a suburb just outside Minneapolis.

Chauvin's attorney had argued that the jurors could be influenced by the prospect of what might happen as a result of their verdict.

But the judge said he will not sequester the jury until next Monday, when he expects closing arguments to begin. He also denied a defense request to question jurors about what they might have seen about Sunday's police shooting of 20-year-old Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center.

The Brooklyn Center police chief later called the shooting accidental, saying the officer who fired apparently meant to draw a Taser, not a handgun.

Stoughton, the use-of-force expert, said the officers who subdued Floyd should have known he was not trying to attack them when he struggled and frantically said he was claustrophobic as they tried to put him in a squad car.

"I don't see him presenting a threat of anything," Stoughton said, adding that no reasonable officer would conclude otherwise.

Stoughton also pointed to instances when Chauvin should have been aware of Floyd's growing distress: After one officer suggested rolling Floyd onto his side, Chauvin said no. The 19-year police veteran ignored bystanders who were shouting that Floyd was not responsive. And when another officer said Floyd didn't have a pulse, Stoughton said, Chauvin's response was "Huh."

Mike Brandt, a local defense attorney closely watching the case, said Philonise Floyd's testimony was irrelevant to whether Chauvin caused Floyd's death, "but it certainly plays on the sympathy of the jury." He said Stoughton's testimony gave prosecutors an opportunity to leave the jury "with one more image of the video" of Floyd pleading for his life.

"It was the parting shot by the state," Brandt said.

Earlier Monday, Dr. Jonathan Rich, a cardiology expert from Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, echoed previous witnesses in saying Floyd died of low oxygen levels from the way he was held down by police.

He rejected defense theories that Floyd died of a drug overdose or a heart condition. Floyd had fentanyl and methamphetamine in his system, high blood pressure and narrowing of the heart arteries, according to previous testimony.

"It was the truly the prone restraint and positional restraints that led to his asphyxiation," Rich said.

In fact, the expert said, "Every indicator is that Mr. Floyd had actually an exceptionally strong heart."

On cross-examination, Nelson tried to shift blame onto Floyd, asking if Floyd would have survived had he "simply gotten in the back seat of the squad car."

But Rich rejected that line of argument: "Had he not been restrained in the way in which he was, I think he would have survived that day. I think he would have gone home, or wherever he was going to go."

Police: Minnesota officer meant to draw Taser, not handgun

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM Associated Press

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BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (AP) — The police officer who fatally shot a Black man during a traffic stop in a Minneapolis suburb apparently intended to fire a Taser, not a handgun, as the man struggled with police, the city's police chief said Monday, as police clashed with protesters for the second night in a row.

Brooklyn Center Police Chief Tim Gannon described the shooting death Sunday of 20-year-old Daunte Wright as "an accidental discharge." It happened as police were trying to arrest Wright on an outstanding warrant. The shooting sparked protests and unrest in a metropolitan area already on edge because of the trial of the first of four police officers charged in George Floyd's death.

"I'll Tase you! I'll Tase you! Taser! Taser! Taser!" the officer is heard shouting on her body cam footage released at a news conference. She draws her weapon after the man breaks free from police outside his car and gets back behind the wheel.

After firing a single shot from her handgun, the car speeds away, and the officer is heard saying, "Holy (expletive)! I shot him."

Crowds began gathering outside the the Brooklyn Center police station late Monday afternoon, with hundreds there by nightfall despite the governor's dusk-to-dawn curfew. A drum beat incessantly, and the crowd broke into frequent chants of "Daunte Wright!" Some shouted obscenities at officers.

About 90 minutes after the curfew deadline, police began firing gas canisters and flash-bang grenades, sending clouds wafting over the crowd and chasing some away. Some protesters picked up smoke canisters and threw them back toward police. Others shot fireworks toward police lines. A long line of police in riot gear, rhythmically pushing their clubs in front of them, began slowly forcing back the remaining crowds.

"Move back!" the police chanted. "Hands up! Don't shoot!" the crowd chanted back.

By 10 p.m., only a few dozen protesters remained.

Law enforcement agencies had stepped up their presence across the Minneapolis area after the Sunday night violence. The number of Minnesota National Guard troops was expected to more than double to over 1,000 by Monday night.

Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott called the shooting "deeply tragic" and said the officer should be fired.

"We cannot afford to make mistakes that lead to the loss of life of other people," he said. "We're going to do everything we can to ensure that justice is done and our communities are made whole."

Elliott later announced that the city council had voted to give his office "command authority" over the police department.

This "will streamline things and establish a chain of command and leadership," he wrote on Twitter. He also said the city manager had been fired, and that the deputy city manager would take over his duties.

The reason behind the firing was not immediately clear, but the city manager controls the police department, according to the city's charter. Now-former City Manager Curt Boganey, speaking earlier to reporters, said the officer who shot Wright would get "due process" after the shooting.

"All employees working for the city of Brooklyn Center are entitled to due process with respect to discipline," he said.

Brooklyn Center is a modest suburb just north of Minneapolis that has seen its demographics shift dramatically in recent years. In 2000, more than 70% of the city was white. Today, a majority of residents are Black, Asian or Latino.

Elliott, the city's first Black mayor, immigrated from Liberia as a child.

Organizers from the Movement for Black Lives, a national coalition of more than 150 Black-led political and advocacy groups, pointed to Wright's killing as yet another reason why cities must take up proposals for defunding an "irreparably broken, racist system."

"The fact that police killed him just miles from where they murdered George Floyd last year is a slap in the face to an entire community," said Karissa Lewis, the coalition's national field director.

The body camera footage showed three officers around a stopped car, which authorities said was pulled over because it had expired registration tags. When another officer attempts to handcuff Wright, a second officer tells him he's being arrested on a warrant. That's when the struggle begins, followed by the shooting. Then the car travels several blocks before striking another vehicle.

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It "is my belief that the officer had the intention to deploy their Taser but instead shot Mr. Wright with a single bullet," Gannon said. "This appears to me from what I viewed and the officer's reaction in distress immediately after that this was an accidental discharge that resulted in the tragic death of Mr. Wright."

Wright died of a gunshot wound to the chest, the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's office said in a statement.

A female passenger sustained non-life-threatening injuries during the crash, authorities said. Wright's mother, Katie Wright, said that passenger was her son's girlfriend.

The state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, which is investigating the shooting, identified the officer as Kim Potter, a 26-year veteran who has been placed on administrative leave.

Gannon would not say whether she would be fired.

"I think we can watch the video and ascertain whether she will be returning," the chief said.

Court records show Wright was being sought after failing to appear in court on charges that he fled from officers and possessed a gun without a permit during an encounter with Minneapolis police in June.

Wright's mother said her son called her as he was getting pulled over.

During the call, she said she heard scuffling and then someone saying "Daunte, don't run" before the call ended. When she called back, her son's girlfriend answered and said he had been shot.

His brother, Dallas Bryant, told about a hundred people gathered for a candlelight vigil Monday evening that Wright sounded scared during the phone call, and questioned how the officer could accidentally reach for a gun instead of a Taser.

"You know the difference between plastic and metal. We all know it," he said.

President Joe Biden urged calm after watching the body camera footage.

"We do know that the anger, pain and trauma amidst the Black community is real," Biden said from the Oval Office. But that "does not justify violence and looting."

Demonstrators began to gather shortly after the shooting, with some jumping atop police cars. Marchers also descended on the city's police headquarters, throwing rocks and other objects. About 20 businesses were broken into at the city's Shingle Creek shopping center, authorities said.

At least a half-dozen businesses were boarding up their windows along Minneapolis' Lake Street, the scene of some of the most intense violence after Floyd's death. National Guard vehicles were deployed to a few major intersections. Several professional sports teams in Minneapolis called off games because of safety concerns.

The trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis officer charged in Floyd's death, continued Monday. Floyd, a Black man, died May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck. Prosecutors say Floyd was pinned for 9 minutes, 29 seconds. The judge in that case refused Monday to sequester the jury after a defense attorney argued that the panel could be influenced by the prospect of what might happen as a result of their verdict.

Student fires at officers at Tennessee school, is killed

By TRAVIS LOLLER and ADRIAN SAINZ Associated Press

A student opened fire on officers responding to a report of a possible gunman at a Tennessee high school Monday, and police shot back and killed him, authorities said. The shooting wounded an officer and comes as the community reels from off-campus gun violence that has left three other students dead this year.

Police found the student in a bathroom at Austin-East Magnet High School in Knoxville, a city about 180 miles (290 kilometers) east of Nashville, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Director David B. Rausch said at a news conference. They ordered the student to come out, but he wouldn't comply, and that's when he reportedly opened fire, Rausch said. Police fired back.

The student died at the school, and the officer was taken into surgery after being shot at least once in the upper leg, authorities said. The officer was expected to recover, and no one else was hurt. It wasn't yet clear why the student brought a gun to school or why he fired at officers.

"It's a sad day for Knoxville, and it's tough for Austin-East," Rausch said.

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Asked about the overwhelming police response to a call that came in just before afternoon dismissal, Knoxville Police Chief Eve Thomas said, "We have a student, a school incident. It's our worst fear, an active shooter in a school."

The shooting comes as more classrooms are reopening to students after months of remote learning during the coronavirus pandemic, which cut down the number of mass killings in the U.S. The nation has seen series of mass shootings in recent weeks, including eight people killed at three Atlanta-area massage businesses on March 16 and 10 people killed at Colorado supermarket on March 22.

Knox County Schools restarted in-person learning in January, but Austin-East Magnet High School went back to virtual instruction briefly in February after the spate of shooting deaths of students. The school will be closed again Tuesday and Wednesday.

Speaking outside a hospital, Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon told news station WATE-TV that she spoke with the wounded officer and he was conscious and in good spirits.

Kincannon, a former Knox County Schools board president, spoke at a February press conference about the gun violence that took the lives of three Austin-East students less than three weeks apart this year. Two of the victims were 15, and the other was 16.

"I know that school is a safe place," Kincannon said at that time, according to the Knoxville News Sentinel. "It's a place where people are learning. ... The issues with violence are happening in the community, and it's affecting kids when they're outside of the school. That's why we are focusing our efforts to protect the innocent, protect the school, protect the children and students and staff."

The newspaper reported that the school was adding three school resource officers and stepping up patrols around dismissal time.

State Rep. Sam McKenzie, who represents the district and went to the school, said in a statement: "I am at a loss to describe my sadness as yet another horrific act of gun violence has happened in my community," urging people to "reclaim the sanctity of our beloved neighborhood."

"This is the fourth unnecessary shooting involving the Austin East community this year and we must make sure we take every step and make every effort to prevent these tragedies from continuing to occur," McKenzie's statement said.

Gov. Bill Lee mentioned the shooting at a Monday news conference but said he had little information.

"I just wanted to make reference to that and ask, for those who are watching, online or otherwise, to pray for that situation and for the families and the victims that might be affected by that in our state," he said.

Last week, the Republican governor signed legislation that will make Tennessee the latest state to allow most adults 21 and older to carry handguns — openly or concealed — without first clearing a background check and training. Lee backed the legislation over objections from law enforcement groups, who argued that the state's existing permit system provided an important safeguard for knowing who should or shouldn't be carrying a gun.

When asked earlier this year whether recent mass shootings in Georgia, Colorado and others gave him any concern about timing, Lee said the increased penalties mean that "we in fact will be strengthening laws that would help prevent gun crimes in the future."

Expert: Chauvin did not take actions of 'reasonable officer'

By AMY FORLITI, STEVE KARNOWSKI and TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Prosecutors' case against former Officer Derek Chauvin drew toward a close Monday with tender memories from George Floyd's younger brother, along with another look at the harrowing video and testimony from a use-of-force expert who said no "reasonable" officer would have done what Chauvin did.

Seth Stoughton, a professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law, judged Chauvin's actions against what a reasonable police officer in the same situation would have done, and repeatedly found that Chauvin did not meet the test.

"No reasonable officer would have believed that that was an appropriate, acceptable or reasonable use

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of force," Stoughton said of the way Floyd was held facedown with a knee across his neck for up to 9 minutes, 29 seconds.

He said, too, that the failure to roll Floyd over and render aid "as his increasing medical distress became obvious" was unreasonable.

He said it was unreasonable as well to think that Floyd might harm officers or escape after he had been handcuffed to the ground. And in yet another blow to Chauvin's defense, Stoughton said a reasonable officer would not have viewed the yelling bystanders as a threat.

The matter of what is reasonable carries great weight: Police officers are allowed certain latitude to use deadly force when someone puts the officer or other people in danger. But legal experts say a key question for the jury will be whether Chauvin's actions were reasonable in those specific circumstances.

On cross-examination, Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson questioned Stoughton's opinion that putting Floyd on his stomach in the first place was itself unreasonable and excessive.

"Reasonable minds can disagree, agreed?" Nelson asked.

"On this particular point, no," the witness said.

Prosecutors are expected to rest their case on Tuesday, after which the defense will begin presenting its side. During 11 days of testimony, prosecution experts, including the Minneapolis police chief and medical professionals, said that the now-fired white officer violated his training and used excessive force and that Floyd died from a lack of oxygen because of the way his breathing was constricted.

Earlier in the day Monday, Philonise Floyd, 39, took the witness stand and lovingly recalled how his older brother used to make the best banana mayonnaise sandwiches, how George drilled him in catching a football, and the way George used to mark his height on the wall as a boy because he wanted to grow taller.

He shed tears as he was shown a picture of his late mother and a young George, saying, "I miss both of them."

His testimony at Chauvin's murder trial was part of an effort by prosecutors to humanize George Floyd in front of the jury and make the 46-year-old Black man more than a crime statistic. Minnesota is a rarity in allowing "spark of life" testimony during the trial stage.

Philonise Floyd described growing up in a poor area of Houston with George and their other siblings.

He said Floyd played football and deliberately threw the ball at different angles so Philonise would have to practice diving for it. "I always thought my brother couldn't throw. But he never intended to throw the ball to me," he said, smiling.

Earlier Monday, Judge Peter Cahill rejected a defense request to immediately sequester the jury, the morning after the killing of a Black man during a traffic stop triggered unrest in a suburb just outside Minneapolis.

Chauvin's attorney had argued that the jurors could be influenced by the prospect of what might happen as a result of their verdict.

But the judge said he will not sequester the jury until next Monday, when he expects closing arguments to begin. He also denied a defense request to question jurors about what they might have seen about Sunday's police shooting of 20-year-old Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center.

In the wake of the shooting, protesters broke into about 20 businesses, jumped on police cars and hurled rocks and other objects at officers in Brooklyn Center, about 10 miles from the heavily fortified Minneapolis courthouse.

The Brooklyn Center police chief later called the shooting accidental, saying the officer who fired apparently meant to draw a Taser, not a handgun.

Stoughton, the use-of-force expert, said the officers who subdued Floyd should have known he was not trying to attack them when he struggled and frantically said he was claustrophobic as they tried to put him in a squad car.

"I don't see him presenting a threat of anything," Stoughton said, adding that no reasonable officer would conclude otherwise.

Stoughton also pointed to instances when Chauvin should have been aware of Floyd's growing distress: After one officer suggested rolling Floyd onto his side, Chauvin said no. The 19-year police veteran ignored

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bystanders who were shouting that Floyd was not responsive. And when another officer said Floyd didn't have a pulse, Stoughton said, Chauvin's response was "Huh."

Mike Brandt, a local defense attorney closely watching the case, said Philonise Floyd's testimony was irrelevant to whether Chauvin caused Floyd's death, "but it certainly plays on the sympathy of the jury." He said Stoughton's testimony gave prosecutors an opportunity to leave the jury "with one more image of the video" of Floyd pleading for his life.

"It was the parting shot by the state," Brandt said.

Earlier Monday, Dr. Jonathan Rich, a cardiology expert from Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, echoed previous witnesses in saying Floyd died of low oxygen levels from the way he was held down by police.

He rejected defense theories that Floyd died of a drug overdose or a heart condition. Floyd had fentanyl and methamphetamine in his system, high blood pressure and narrowing of the heart arteries, according to previous testimony.

"It was the truly the prone restraint and positional restraints that led to his asphyxiation," Rich said.

In fact, the expert said, "Every indicator is that Mr. Floyd had actually an exceptionally strong heart."

On cross-examination, Nelson tried to shift blame onto Floyd, asking if Floyd would have survived had he "simply gotten in the back seat of the squad car."

But Rich rejected that line of argument: "Had he not been restrained in the way in which he was, I think he would have survived that day. I think he would have gone home, or wherever he was going to go."

Chauvin's attorney is expected to call his own medical experts to make the case that it was not the officer's knee that killed Floyd. The defense has not said whether Chauvin will testify.

Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala deploy troops to lower migration

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration has struck an agreement with Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala to temporarily surge security forces to their borders in an effort to reduce the tide of migration to the U.S. border.

The agreement comes as the U.S. saw a record number of unaccompanied children attempting to cross the border in March, and the largest number of Border Patrol encounters overall with migrants on the southern border — just under 170,000 — since March 2001.

According to White House press secretary Jen Psaki, Mexico will maintain a deployment of about 10,000 troops, while Guatemala has surged 1,500 police and military personnel to its southern border and Honduras deployed 7,000 police and military to its border "to disperse a large contingent of migrants" there. Guatemala will also set up 12 checkpoints along the migratory route through the country.

A White House official said Guatemala and Honduras were deploying troops temporarily in response to a large caravan of migrants that was being organized at the end of March.

Psaki said "the objective is to make it more difficult to make the journey, and make crossing the borders more difficult."

She added that the agreement was the product of "a series of bilateral discussions" between U.S. officials and the governments of the Central American nations. While Vice President Kamala Harris has been tasked with leading diplomatic efforts to tamp down on the increase in migration at the U.S. border, Psaki declined to share details on her involvement with the discussions and said only that the discussions happened at "several levels."

She noted that Roberta Jacobson, who will depart her role as the administration's southwest border coordinator at the end of the month, was involved in talks.

Mexico announced in March that it was deploying National Guard members and immigration agents to its southern border, and it has maintained more personnel at its southern border since Trump threatened tariffs on Mexican imports in 2019.

On Monday, Mexico's Foreign Affairs ministry said, "Mexico will maintain the existing deployment of fed-

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eral forces in the its border area, with the objective of enforcing its own immigration legislation, to attend to migrants, mainly unaccompanied minors, and to combat the trafficking of people.”

Honduras Foreign Affairs Minister Lisandro Rosales said Monday that Honduras maintains a multinational force at its border with Guatemala that works closely with that government on not only immigration, but also organized crime and other illegal activity. But “there was no commitment on the part of the Honduran delegation to put soldiers on the border, even though there is a clear commitment by the Honduran government to avoid this kind of migration that generates death and mourning for Honduran families,” Rosales said.

But Honduras Defense Secretary Fredy Santiago Díaz Zelaya, who was part of a Honduran delegation that met with U.S. officials in Washington last week, said later that the military was studying the possibility of sending more troops to the border to assist in migration control. He said the military always works under a plan and that planning would determine how many troops would assist national police and immigration authorities at the border.

“We need to do a correct analysis of the situation, increase troops if it’s necessary,” Díaz Zelaya told local press. He said Honduras would do so “in response to this request that comes from the great nation to the north (the United States) to be able to help on the issue of immigration.”

The Guatemalan government denied there was any signed agreement with the United States to place troops at the border to stop migrants. “The Guatemalan government has undertaken protection and security actions at the border since last year, on its own initiative, it is a constitutional mandate,” said presidential spokeswoman Patricia Letona. “In the context of the pandemic, the protection of the borders has become a fundamental aim for the containment of the virus.”

Guatemalan troops have been responsible for breaking up the last several attempted migrant caravans. The increase in migrants at the border is becoming one of the major challenges confronting Biden in the early months of his first term.

Numbers grew sharply during Trump’s final year in office but further accelerated under Biden, who quickly ended many of his predecessor’s policies, including one that made asylum-seekers wait in Mexico for court hearings in the U.S.

Mexicans represented the largest proportion of people encountered by the U.S. Border Patrol, and nearly all were single adults. Arrivals of people from Honduras and Guatemala were second and third, respectively, and more than half of the people from those countries were families or children traveling alone.

Biden wants infrastructure deal, but GOP doubts persist

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden wants Congress to know he’s sincere about cutting a deal on infrastructure, but Republican lawmakers have deep-seated doubts about the scope of his proposed package, its tax hikes and Biden’s premise that this is an inflection point for the U.S. as a world power.

Biden met Monday afternoon with a bipartisan group of lawmakers and tried to assure them that the Oval Office gathering was not “window dressing.” One of the core disputes is over what counts as infrastructure in his \$2.3 trillion proposal.

“I’m prepared to negotiate as to the extent of my infrastructure project, as well as how we pay for it,” Biden said. “It’s going to get down to what we call ‘infrastructure.’”

Republican Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi indicated after the meeting that he was willing to negotiate with Biden and called it a “good discussion.” But a more fundamental disagreement also emerged about whether the United States is losing its status atop the global economy because of its deteriorating infrastructure.

“He says that we’re a declining superpower, the United States is no longer number one,” Wicker said afterward. “I just fundamentally disagree with that.”

The meeting came as the Biden’s team is making a direct argument for lawmakers to put their constituents ahead of their ideologies. The White House released state-by-state breakdowns Monday that show the dire shape of roads, bridges, the power grid and housing affordability, among other issues. An appeal to the

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broader public is unlikely to resonate much with Republican lawmakers who have already blasted the plan.

Among the Republicans at the meeting were Sen. Deb Fischer of Nebraska and Reps. Garret Graves of Louisiana and Don Young of Alaska. Democrats attending were Sens. Maria Cantwell of Washington and Sen. Alex Padilla of California and Reps. Donald Payne Jr. of New Jersey and David Price of North Carolina.

In the room, "nobody said we didn't need infrastructure investment," Cantwell, the chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said in an interview.

The lawmakers said Biden will seek to drive a consensus by having his team revisit with them and others, as soon as Tuesday.

Graves said the president talked about how he was open to discussion and open to negotiation on the size, scope and definition of infrastructure.

"Those are all the exact words that I wanted to hear going into the meeting. And so that was really encouraging," Graves, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, told The Associated Press. "Is this truly going to be a two-way discussion where we talk about better ways to deliver infrastructure, what the appropriate size and scope are, ways of funding, things like that?"

The figures in the state summaries paint a decidedly bleak outlook for the world's largest economy after years of repairs being deferred and delayed. They suggest that too much infrastructure is unsafe for vehicles at any speed, while highlighting the costs of extreme weather events that have become more frequent with climate change as well as dead spots for broadband and a dearth of child care options.

Drawn from an array of private and public data, the state reports show there are 7,300 miles (11,748 kilometers) of highway in Michigan alone that are in poor condition. Damaged streets in North Carolina impose an average yearly cost of \$500 on motorists. Iowa has 4,571 bridges in need of repair. There is a roughly 4-in-10 chance that a public transit vehicle in Indiana might be ready for the scrap yard. Pennsylvania's schools are short \$1.4 billion for maintenance and upgrades.

Most states received a letter grade on their infrastructure. West Virginia earned a D. So did Biden's home state of Delaware. Of the states rated, the highest grade went to Georgia and Utah, which each notched a C-plus. The lowest grade, D-minus, went to the territory of Puerto Rico.

The administration is banking that the data will confirm the everyday experiences of Americans as they bump over potholes, get trapped in traffic jams and wait for buses that almost never correspond to published schedules. There is already a receptive audience to the sales pitch, and the strategy is that public support can overcome any congressional misgivings.

"We don't have a lot of work to do to persuade the American people that U.S. infrastructure needs major improvement," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said on Fox News Channel's "Fox News Sunday" ahead of the reports' release. "The American people already know it."

Republican lawmakers have been quick to reject the infrastructure proposal from Biden. They say just a fraction of the spending goes to traditional infrastructure, as \$400 billion would expand Medicaid support for caregivers and substantial portions would fund electric vehicle charging stations and address the racial injustice of highways that were built in ways that destroyed Black neighborhoods.

The reports give some data to back up their argument that more money should be spent on roads and bridges. Biden's plan would modernize 20,000 miles (32,187 kilometers) worth of roadways, but California by itself has 14,220 miles (22,885 kilometers) of highway in poor condition.

Republican lawmakers also object to funding the package by increasing the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28% and increasing the global minimum tax, among other tax changes including stepped-up IRS enforcement being proposed by the Biden administration.

"This plan would impose the biggest tax hikes in a generation when workers need an economic recovery. It would gut right-to-work protections for blue-collar workers," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said in a Monday floor speech. "It would throw hundreds of billions at the far-left's 'green' fads."

Yet the state-by-state reports make clear that many of the people in Mississippi that Wicker represents could benefit from the package, an aspect of the Biden effort to engender the backing of voters across party lines.

Mississippi needs \$4.8 billion for drinking water and \$289 million for schools. Nearly a quarter of house-

holds lack an internet subscription, and a similar percentage lives in areas without broadband. Mississippians who use public transportation have to devote an extra 87.7% of their time to commuting.

Mississippi's infrastructure received a grade of D-plus.

Fox stands behind Tucker Carlson after ADL urges his firing

By TALI ARBEL AP Technology Writer

Fox Corp. is standing behind Tucker Carlson after the Anti-Defamation League last week called for the company to fire the opinion host for his on-air defense of the white-supremacist "great replacement" theory.

In a letter sent Sunday to the civil rights group and shared with The Associated Press, Fox CEO Lachlan Murdoch said Carlson had "decried and rejected replacement theory" when he said during the Thursday evening segment, "White replacement theory? No, no, this is a voting rights question."

The ADL argued in a reply sent Monday to Murdoch that Carlson used white-supremacist language even if he claimed he didn't.

"Mr. Carlson's attempt to at first dismiss this theory, while in the very next breath endorsing it under cover of 'a voting rights question,' does not give him free license to invoke a white supremacist trope," wrote ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt.

The replacement conspiracy theory holds that people of color are replacing white people in the West, enabled by Jews and progressive politicians.

During a guest appearance Thursday on "Fox News Primetime," Carlson "embraced a foundational theory of white supremacy," the ADL said.

During the show, Carlson said "the left and all the little gatekeepers on Twitter become literally hysterical if you use the term 'replacement,' if you suggest that the Democratic Party is trying to replace the current electorate of voters now casting ballots with new people, more obedient voters from the Third World." He added that he had "less political power because they are importing a brand new electorate."

The ADL also listed numerous instances Carlson has used anti-immigrant language in the past, including blaming immigration for making the U.S. "poorer, and dirtier, and more divided," and questioned whether white supremacy was real.

Murdoch noted in his letter that the ADL had once honored his father, Rupert Murdoch, with a leadership award. The ADL's Greenblatt replied that the award was granted "over a decade ago, but let me be clear that we would not do so today, and it does not absolve you, him, the network, or its board from the moral failure of not taking action against Mr. Carlson."

A Fox spokesperson declined to comment on the ADL's Monday letter.

EXPLAINER: Prosecution explores Floyd's 'spark of life'

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Prosecutors trying a white former Minneapolis police officer in George Floyd's death put one of Floyd's brothers on the witness stand Monday in a further effort to humanize him for the jury and counter the defense narrative that Floyd was at least partially responsible for his own death due to his use of illegal drugs.

Philonise Floyd, who has frequently occupied the Floyd family's sole seat in the socially distanced courtroom, was allowed to testify under a legal doctrine called "spark of life." He told the jury about how they grew up poor in Houston's Third Ward, his brother's passion for sports, his marginal cooking skills and how he was devastated by his mother's death.

The defense didn't use Philonise Floyd's appearance to discuss George Floyd's drug use. That contrasted with earlier spark of life testimony from George Floyd's girlfriend, Courteney Ross, who told the jury how they both struggled with addiction to opioids.

Chauvin, 45, is charged with murder and manslaughter. Prosecutors say he knelt on Floyd's neck for 9 minutes, 29 seconds, pinning the handcuffed man to the ground. The most serious charge — second-

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degree murder — carries up to 40 years in prison.

WHAT IS THE "SPARK OF LIFE" DOCTRINE?

The doctrine emerged in 1985 when a defendant accused of killing a police officer argued to the Minnesota Supreme Court that the prosecutor prejudiced the jury with a speech about the officer's childhood, his parents and his marriage. The prosecutor became so emotional the trial court had to take a recess.

The court ruled that prosecutors can present evidence that a murder victim was "not just bones and sinews covered with flesh, but was imbued with the spark of life."

"It remains very odd in the law — I don't think any other state would allow this kind of thing," said Ted Sampell-Jones, a professor at the Mitchell Hamline School of Law. "Criminal lawyers around the country are really quite astounded that this sort of testimony is allowed in Minnesota. But it is allowed under current law, and the prosecution is using that to its advantage."

WHAT DID THE JURY LEARN FROM PHILONISE FLOYD?

Philonise Floyd said his brother was a leader in the family and in their neighborhood. His pride was evident when the prosecution showed jurors a photo of his brother in uniform for the South Florida College basketball team.

"He used to make the best banana mayonnaise sandwiches," he recalled, explaining: "George couldn't cook. He couldn't boil water."

Jurors were riveted and focused on Philonise Floyd as he talked about his brother. At least one juror appeared charmed and nodded as he described how his older brother used to constantly measure himself because he wanted to be taller.

But Philonise Floyd became tearful as he told the jury about his brother's deep pain over his mother's death in 2018. "He loved her so dearly," he recalled, but his brother was not able to get back to Houston before she died.

"It hurt him a lot," he said. "And when we went to the funeral, it's just, George just sat there at the casket, over and over again. He would just say, 'Mama, Mama,' over and over again. And I didn't know what to tell him because I was in pain, too. We all were hurtin' and he was just kissing her and just kissing her. He didn't want to leave the casket."

But he smiled when he was shown a picture of George Floyd with his daughter, who he said is now 7.

WHAT DID THE JURY LEARN FROM ROSS?

Ross told jurors earlier how she and George Floyd both struggled with opioid addiction throughout their relationship, which began in 2017. "We both suffered from chronic pain. Mine was in my neck and his was in his back." She said they "tried really hard to break that addiction many times."

When Chauvin's defense attorney, Eric Nelson, cross-examined Ross, he pushed her hard on Floyd's drug use, including how he was hospitalized in 2020 for what she believed was a heroin overdose. All of that allowed Nelson to repeatedly remind the jury that Floyd was a drug user.

Floyd's cause of death has been a key issue. The defense has argued that Floyd's death was caused by his drug use, underlying health conditions and the adrenaline flowing through his body. An autopsy found fentanyl and methamphetamine in his system, though a series of prosecution experts testified that drugs did not kill Floyd.

DID IT BACKFIRE?

Not on Monday. Prosecutor Steve Schleicher did not ask Philonise Floyd about what he knew, if anything, about his brother's drug use, and Nelson opted not to cross-examine him at all, so the brother spent only about 15 minutes on the witness stand.

Sampsell-Jones said the prosecution was careful to avoid eliciting any testimony that would have opened the door to evidence about George Floyd's criminal record, which the judge has kept out of the trial.

"On balance, it helps the prosecution — it humanizes Floyd and plays on the jury's sympathies," Sampsell-Jones said. "It is a good way for the prosecution to close its case."

Mary Moriarty, a former chief public defender for Hennepin County, said spark of life testimony "can backfire if the jury believes that the state is trying to manipulate their emotions. In this case, I don't think

it will.”

Moriarty also said that the jury at this point knows more about George Floyd than it ever would have learned about most defendants.

Attack on Iran’s Natanz plant muddies US, Iran nuke talks

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The attack on Iran’s Natanz nuclear facility is casting a major shadow over Tuesday’s resumption of indirect talks between the U.S. and Iran over resurrection of the international accord limiting Iran’s nuclear program.

Neither Iran nor the U.S. say the incident will crater the negotiations. But the attack and the destruction of a significant amount of Iran’s uranium enrichment capability add uncertainty to the discussions in Vienna.

The attack gives both sides reason to harden their positions, yet each has incentives to keep the talks on track.

Iran wants Washington to lift sanctions that have contributed to damaging its economy, including measures not related to its nuclear program. It insists that the sanctions be lifted before it returns to compliance with the 2015 nuclear agreement that then-President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of in 2018.

For the Biden administration, the talks are a high-stakes gamble that it can salvage what the Obama administration considered one of its prime foreign policy achievements and slow Iran’s programs, even as critics claim the accord had given Iran a pathway to a nuclear weapon instead of closing it off.

Iran has blamed Israel for the destruction at an important underground facility, and Israeli media has been filled with claims from unnamed officials claiming responsibility.

The Biden administration, meanwhile, has taken a hands-off approach, neither praising nor condemning the attack. The White House said the U.S. “had no involvement” and had “nothing to add to speculation about the causes.”

The attack adds a fresh complication to discussions in Vienna and also to President Joe Biden’s efforts to smooth ties with Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enjoyed a close relationship with Trump, who abandoned the Iran agreement and began a campaign of “maximum pressure” on Iran by imposing harsh sanctions.

The U.S. has said it is prepared to lift or ease sanctions that are “inconsistent” with the nuclear deal along with sanctions that are “inconsistent with the benefits” that Iran expected to get from agreeing to the accord. The deal had removed nuclear sanctions on Iran in exchange for curbs on its atomic program, although critics noted that many of those restrictions are time-limited and will expire before 2030.

Those same critics, including many in Congress, have expressed concerns that non-nuclear sanctions — such as those imposed for terrorism, ballistic missile activity and human rights abuses — may be on the table in the negotiations. The administration has not specifically commented on that but has said it will not offer Iran sweeteners unrelated to the agreement.

Israeli officials have raised concerns, too, about what they fear would be a precipitous U.S. return to the deal, and news of the attack broke as Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was visiting Israel. Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken will be in Brussels later this week for talks with European and NATO allies likely to touch on Iran.

As Austin and Blinken prepared to meet their counterparts in Brussels, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas expressed concern that the attack could affect the talks. “All of what we are hearing from Tehran is not a positive contribution to this,” Maas told reporters.

The destruction of advanced centrifuges at Natanz came at a critical time in the Vienna talks that are intended to resurrect the nuclear deal. Trump’s withdrawal and his reintroduction of sanctions, along with Iran’s decisions to break its own commitments to the agreement, have left it in significant jeopardy.

The weekend attack on Natanz, one of Iran’s main nuclear facilities, came amid a break in the Vienna talks.

Key to the deal were restrictions on Iran’s uranium enrichment. Activities at the heavily fortified Natanz

facility, which is built into a mountain, were among those most constrained.

Natanz has been targeted by sabotage in the past. The Stuxnet computer virus, discovered in 2010 and widely believed to be a joint U.S.-Israeli creation, once disrupted and destroyed Iranian centrifuges there during an earlier period of Western fears about Tehran's program.

Last July, Natanz suffered a mysterious explosion at its advanced centrifuge assembly plant that authorities later described as sabotage. Iran now is rebuilding that facility deep inside a nearby mountain. Iran also blamed Israel for that, as well as the November killing of a scientist who began the country's military nuclear program decades ago.

Israel also has launched a series of airstrikes in neighboring Syria targeting Iranian forces and their equipment. And Israel is suspected in an attack last week on an Iranian cargo ship that is said to serve as a floating base for Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard forces off the coast of Yemen.

Attack on Iran's Natanz plant muddies US, Iran nuke talks

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The attack on Iran's Natanz nuclear facility is casting a major shadow over Tuesday's resumption of indirect talks between the U.S. and Iran over resurrection of the international accord limiting Iran's nuclear program.

Neither Iran nor the U.S. say the incident will crater the negotiations. But the attack and the destruction of a significant amount of Iran's uranium enrichment capability add uncertainty to the discussions in Vienna.

The attack gives both sides reason to harden their positions, yet each has incentives to keep the talks on track.

Iran wants Washington to lift sanctions that have contributed to damaging its economy, including measures not related to its nuclear program. It insists that the sanctions be lifted before it returns to compliance with the 2015 nuclear agreement that then-President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of in 2018.

For the Biden administration, the talks are a high-stakes gamble that it can salvage what the Obama administration considered one of its prime foreign policy achievements and slow Iran's programs, even as critics claim the accord had given Iran a pathway to a nuclear weapon instead of closing it off.

Iran has blamed Israel for the destruction at an important underground facility, and Israeli media has been filled with claims from unnamed officials claiming responsibility.

The Biden administration, meanwhile, has taken a hands-off approach, neither praising nor condemning the attack. The White House said the U.S. "had no involvement" and had "nothing to add to speculation about the causes."

The attack adds a fresh complication to discussions in Vienna and also to President Joe Biden's efforts to smooth ties with Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enjoyed a close relationship with Trump, who abandoned the Iran agreement and began a campaign of "maximum pressure" on Iran by imposing harsh sanctions.

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UN chief urges wealth tax of those who profited during COVID

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Antonio Guterres declared Monday that the world's failure to unite on tackling COVID-19 created wide inequalities, and he called for urgent action including a wealth tax to help finance the global recovery from the coronavirus.

The U.N. chief said latest reports indicate that "there has been a \$5 trillion surge in the wealth of the world's richest in the past year" of the pandemic. He urged governments "to consider a solidarity or wealth tax on those who have profited during the pandemic, to reduce extreme inequalities."

Guterres' call followed an appeal in October by U.N. World Food Program Executive Director David Beasley to the more than 2,000 billionaires in the world, with a combined net worth of \$8 trillion, to open their bank accounts. He warned in November that 2021 would be worse than 2020, and without billions of dollars "we are going to have famines of biblical proportions in 2021."

Guterres told the U.N. Economic and Social Council's Forum on Financing for Development that since the pandemic began "no element of our multilateral response has gone as it should."

He pointed to more than 3 million deaths, increasing coronavirus infections, the worst recession in 90 years, some 120 million people falling back into extreme poverty, and the equivalent of 255 million full-time jobs lost.

"Advancing an equitable global response and recovery from the pandemic is putting multilateralism to the test," he said. "So far, it is a test we have failed."

"The vaccination effort is just one example," Guterres said, stressing that just 10 countries account for around 75% of global vaccinations and many countries haven't even started vaccinating their health care workers and most vulnerable citizens.

"Some estimates put the global cost of unequal access and vaccine hoarding at more than \$9 trillion," he said.

The lack of global solidarity also means that while some countries have mobilized trillions of dollars for COVID-19 relief for their citizens, "many developing countries face insurmountable debt burdens" and face an impossible choice of servicing debt or saving lives, the secretary-general said.

Guterres called for urgent action to make vaccines available to everyone, everywhere; to not only help developing countries but middle-income countries in distress. He said debt payments should be suspended

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beyond the end of the year into 2022 and the international community needs to tackle the roots of the global debt crisis. He said there also must be investment "in education, decent and green jobs, social protection and health systems."

While the pandemic remains the immediate challenge, climate change can't be ignored, Guterres said. He again urged countries to deliver on the \$100 billion annual commitment made a decade ago to help developing countries reduce their emissions and cope with the inevitable impacts of global warming, such as sea level rise and droughts.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan opened the forum urging mobilization of money for developing countries "to recover from the COVID-induced recession" and put them on the path to achieve U.N. development goals for 2030 including eliminating extreme poverty.

He warned that if vaccines are not made available to people everywhere as soon as possible "the virus will roam around and come back."

"Production of the vaccine must be ramped up," Khan said. "Patent and technology-transfer restrictions should be waived to enable this."

Malawi President Lazarus McCarthy, chair of the group of 46 least developed countries, called for access to vaccines and adequate funding for the World Health Organization's COVAX facility to buy and deliver vaccines to developing nations. WHO says COVAX needs \$5 billion in 2021.

McCarthy told the forum the least developed countries, known as LDCs, also want to ensure "that COVID-19 vaccines go beyond the current provision of 20 percent" for the entire population under COVAX.

He also called for "full debt cancellation of all bilateral, multilateral and commercial debts owed by LDCs and a debt standstill with immediate effect" and stepped up development aid including financing to bring the world's poorest nations into the digital world.

'Skilled predator' FBI boss harassed 8 women, watchdog finds

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — One woman carried a ruler at FBI headquarters so she could smack James Hendricks' hands when he reached for her legs and breasts. Another went home shaken after he tugged on her ear and kissed her cheek during a closed-door meeting.

And when Hendricks went on to lead the FBI's field office in Albany, New York, in 2018, colleagues described him as a "skilled predator" who leered at women in the workplace, touched them inappropriately and asked one to have sex in a conference room, according to a newly released federal report obtained by The Associated Press.

Hendricks quietly retired last year as a special agent in charge after the Office of Inspector General — the Justice Department's internal watchdog — concluded he sexually harassed eight female subordinates in one of the FBI's most egregious known cases of sexual misconduct.

Hendricks was among several senior FBI officials highlighted in an AP investigation last year that found a pattern of supervisors avoiding discipline — and retiring with full benefits — even after claims of sexual misconduct against them were substantiated.

The FBI said it could not discuss Hendricks' case but that it "maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual harassment and is committed to fostering a safe work environment where all of our employees are valued, protected and respected."

Hendricks, 50, who now writes a law enforcement blog, did not respond to messages seeking comment. He told investigators his accusers had either misinterpreted his actions or exaggerated his behavior, and that he was not sexually attracted to them.

"It's an ugly, ugly laundry list of things that were said, and that's really hurtful to me and it really just disappoints me," he was quoted as saying.

The details of Hendricks' sexual harassment — outlined in a 52-page report obtained under the Freedom of Information Act — have not previously been reported. The OIG blacked out Hendricks' name in the report, but he was identified by law enforcement officials familiar with his case.

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Drawing on interviews with more than a dozen FBI officials, the report traces Hendricks' harassment to his time at FBI headquarters, where he served as a section chief in the Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate. He was tapped in 2018 to lead the Albany field office, where he supervised more than 200 agents and other FBI employees. Six of his accusers were in Albany; two were in Washington.

Some colleagues chalked up Hendricks' behavior to his being a "Southern gentleman" — he served as a police officer in western Kentucky before joining the bureau in 1998 — but others said he routinely crossed the line, became "super giddy" around women and was "incapable of stopping himself" from harassing them.

Co-workers told investigators he surrounded himself with a "harem" of attractive women, was fixated on high heels and breasts, and was known for gawking at female agents as they walked down the hallway.

In office conversations that involved women, Hendricks would shift his "body posture and head angle to stare at their breasts and bodies in a manner that was calculated to avoid detection," the OIG report says. Male and female agents alike told investigators they endured this "as a condition of simply interacting with their boss."

Even Hendricks' male colleagues considered him "creepy" and one described how he simulated masturbation once when an attractive woman left the room. But like many female agents, they did not report him for fear of retaliation.

Hendricks once asked a female subordinate to sit in the passenger seat of a vehicle "so that I can play with that beautiful hair." He later asked the same woman why she didn't wear shorts to the office and she said "because that would be inappropriate." The woman said she didn't report Hendricks because all of her work required his approval and "she wanted to be successful in the office."

Another woman told investigators that Hendricks pressured her into having a sexual relationship, and that he had been known to be vindictive and "push out" people who crossed him.

"He was in a powerful position," the report says, "and she worried about what he would do if she did not respond to his advances."

FBI policy permits supervisors to pursue sexual relationships with subordinates but requires them be disclosed so management "may determine whether remedial action, such as reassignment, is necessary to prevent interference with the FBI's mission."

The Office of Inspector General, however, said "the imbalance of power between superiors and subordinates could call into question the consensual nature of romantic or intimate relationships."

Ukraine's leader requests a talk with Putin, gets no answer

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's leader has asked for a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin about the Russian troop buildup across his country's border and the escalating tensions in eastern Ukraine, but the request has not been answered so far, his spokeswoman said Monday.

The concentration of Russian troops along the frontier comes amid a surge of cease-fire violations in eastern Ukraine, where Russia-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces have been locked in a conflict since Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. More than 14,000 people have died in fighting in eastern Ukraine and efforts to negotiate a political settlement have stalled.

"The Kremlin, of course, has the request to talk to Vladimir Putin. We haven't received a response so far and very much hope that it's not a refusal of dialogue," Iuliia Mendel, a spokeswoman for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, told The Associated Press. The request was lodged on March 26, when four Ukrainian troops were killed in a mortar attack in the east, she added.

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday he hasn't seen any requests from Zelenskyy "in recent days."

Western and Ukrainian officials have raised concerns about increasingly frequent cease-fire violations in the conflict area. Reports of Ukraine's military casualties have been occurring daily over the past week, and rebels also have reported losses. On Monday, Ukraine's military reported one more serviceman killed, bringing the total to 28 this year.

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The G-7 foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.K. and the United States said Monday they are "deeply concerned by the large ongoing build-up of Russian military forces on Ukraine's borders and in illegally-annexed Crimea." They said the large scale troop movements are threatening and destabilizing and urged Russia "to cease its provocations."

Zelenskyy is expected to head to Paris soon for talks on the buildup with French President Emmanuel Macron, Mendel said Monday.

She said Russia has accumulated 41,000 troops at its border with eastern Ukraine and 42,000 more in Crimea. These numbers are likely to grow as the troops "keep arriving," she said.

During a call with Putin last week, German Chancellor Angela Merkel called for the removal of Russian troop reinforcements "in order to achieve a de-escalation of the situation."

Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said Monday that Germany has been following the Russian military buildup along the border with Ukraine very closely, adding it has been "of great concern to us."

The Kremlin has maintained that Russia is free to deploy its troops wherever it wants on its territory and has repeatedly accused the Ukrainian military of "provocative actions" along the line of control in the east and plans to retake control of the rebel regions by force. Kremlin officials charged that Kyiv's actions have threatened Russia's security, warning that Russia may intervene to protect Russian speakers in the east.

Speaking on a trip to Egypt on Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that "the current regime in Kyiv might resort to reckless actions in an attempt to restore its ratings."

Amid the rising tensions, the United States has notified Turkey that two U.S. warships will sail to the Black Sea on April 14 and April 15 and stay there until May 4 and May 5.

Russia long has bristled at Ukraine's aspirations to join NATO and its increasing military cooperation with the U.S. and its allies.

Lavrov argued that while Russia was moving troops on its own territory, "a question what the U.S. ships and servicemen taking part in NATO activities in Ukraine are doing thousands of kilometers away from its territory has remained unanswered."

'Huge' explosion rocks St. Vincent as volcano keeps erupting

By KRISTIN DEANE and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (AP) — La Soufriere volcano fired an enormous amount of ash and hot gas early Monday in the biggest explosive eruption yet since volcanic activity began on the eastern Caribbean island of St. Vincent late last week, with officials worried about the lives of those who have refused to evacuate.

Experts called it a "huge explosion" that generated pyroclastic flows down the volcano's south and southwest flanks.

"It's destroying everything in its path," Erouscilla Joseph, director of the University of the West Indies' Seismic Research Center, told The Associated Press. "Anybody who would have not heeded the evacuation, they need to get out immediately."

There were no immediate reports of injuries or death, but government officials were scrambling to respond to the latest eruption, which was even bigger than the first eruption that occurred Friday morning. Roughly 16,000 people who live in communities close to the volcano had been evacuated under government orders on Thursday, but an unknown number have remained behind and refused to move.

Richard Robertson, with the seismic research center, told local station NBC Radio that the volcano's old and new dome have been destroyed and that a new crater has been created. He said that the pyroclastic flows would have razed everything in their way.

"Anything that was there, man, animal, anything...they are gone," he said. "And it's a terrible thing to say it."

Joseph said the latest explosion is equivalent to the one that occurred in 1902 and killed some 1,600. The volcano last erupted in 1979. Ash from the ongoing explosions has fallen on Barbados and other nearby islands.

One government minister who toured the island's northeast region on Sunday said he saw an estimated

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two or three dozen people still remaining in the community of Sandy Bay alone, prompting Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves to urge people to leave.

"It is over time for you to leave," he said. "It is dangerous."

Emergency management officials warned they would arrest all those, residents or not, caught inside the red zone without police permission. Communities in the red zone are those closest to the volcano.

Two young men, Codrian Simmons and Rashon Charles, have been praised for their bravery as they helped evacuate some 115 people from communities that are in danger.

"The monstrous force of this volcano has been an out-of-(this) world experience," Simmons told the AP, adding that the experience has been traumatic and that people in shelters are pleading for help and supplies including water, dry goods, sheets and toiletries. "It is heart wrenching!"

The ongoing volcanic activity has threatened water and food supplies, with the government forced to drill for fresh water and distribute it via trucks.

"We cannot put tarpaulin over a river," said Garth Saunders, minister of the island's water and sewer authority, referring to the impossibility of trying to protect current water sources from ongoing falling ash.

He told NBC Radio that officials also are trying to set up water distribution points.

Meanwhile, Gonsalves said government officials are meeting Monday afternoon to talk about difficulties with food supplies.

Deputy Prime Minister Montgomery Daniel told the radio station that the damage was extensive in the island's northeast region, which he toured on Sunday. Forests and farms were wiped out, with coconut, breadfruit, mango and soursop trees destroyed, as well as plantain and banana crops.

"What I saw was indeed terrible," he said.

Cots, tents, water tanks and other basic supplies were flooding into St. Vincent as nearby nations rushed to help those affected by the eruptions. At least four empty cruise ships floated nearby, waiting to take evacuees to other islands who have agreed to temporarily receive them, including Antigua and Grenada. Gonsalves, however, said he expects his administration might call off the cruise ships since the vast majority of people seem to be staying in St. Vincent for now.

The only people evacuated from St. Vincent via cruise ship are 136 farm workers who are part of a seasonal agricultural program and had been stranded on the island. The group was supposed to fly to Canada, but their flight was cancelled as a result of Friday's explosion. They arrived Saturday in St. Lucia and will board a flight to Canada from there.

Gonsalves told NBC Radio on Sunday that his government will do everything possible to help those forced to abandon their homes in ash-filled communities.

"It's a huge operation that is facing us," he said. "It's going to be costly, but I don't want us to penny pinch...this is going to be a long haul."

Gonsalves said it could take four months for life to go back to normal in St. Vincent, part of an island chain of that includes the Grenadines. The majority of the 100,000 inhabitants live in St. Vincent.

Among them is Ranique Chewitt, a 32-year-old salesman who lives in South Rivers, located southeast of the volcano.

He hasn't had to evacuate, but said he is worried about his health and water supply and hasn't left home since the first eruption on Friday morning: "I do get shortness of breath from dust, and I am inside."

The pandemic also is complicating response efforts. At least 14 new cases of COVID-19 have been reported since the eruptions began on Friday, and all those going to shelters are being tested. Those who test positive are taken to isolation centers. More than 3,700 people are in 84 government shelters.

The eastern Caribbean has 19 live volcanoes, 17 of those located on 11 islands. The remaining two are located underwater near Grenada, including one called Kick 'Em Jenny that has been active in recent years. The most active volcano of all is Soufriere Hills in Montserrat, which has erupted continuously since 1995, destroying the capital of Plymouth and killing at least 19 people in 1997.

Tensions rise in water battle along Oregon-California line

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By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — One of the worst droughts in memory in a massive agricultural region straddling the California-Oregon border could mean steep cuts to irrigation water for hundreds of farmers this summer to sustain endangered fish species critical to local tribes.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which oversees water allocations in the federally owned Klamath Project, is expected to announce this week how the season's water will be divvied up after delaying the decision a month.

For the first time in 20 years, it's possible that the 1,400 irrigators who have farmed for generations on 225,000 acres (91,000 hectares) of reclaimed farmland will get no water at all — or so little that farming wouldn't be worth it. Several tribes in Oregon and California are equally desperate for water to sustain threatened and endangered species of fish central to their heritage.

A network of six wildlife refuges that make up the largest wetland complex west of the Mississippi River also depend on the project's water, but will likely go dry this year.

The competing demands over a vanishing natural resource foreshadow a difficult and tense summer in a region where farmers, conservationists and tribes have engaged in years of legal battles over who has greater rights to an ever-dwindling water supply. Two of the tribes, the Klamath and Yurok, hold treaties guaranteeing the protection of their fisheries.

The last — and only — time that water was cut off for irrigators, in 2001, some family farms went out of business and a "bucket brigade" protest attracted 15,000 people who scooped water from the Klamath River and passed it, hand over hand, to a parched irrigation canal. The farmers-vs.-fish debate became a touchstone for Republicans who used the crisis to take aim at the Endangered Species Act, with one GOP lawmaker calling the irrigation shutoff a "poster child" for why changes were needed.

Tribes, for their part, say the fish are intertwined with their existence going back millennia. The Klamath believe the sucker fish — the first fish to return to the river after the winter — were created to provide for and sustain their people. Further downstream, the Yurok define the seasons by the fish runs.

"Some people say that because of those fish, our people are still here," Don Gentry, chairman of the Klamath Tribes, said of the sucker fish. "They're the canary in the coal mine. If they die out, it shows you that something is going very wrong here in the Basin."

This season, amid a pandemic and an ever-deeper partisan divide, some in the region fear what's to come.

"I think that the majority of people understand that acts of violence and protest isn't going to be productive, but at the same time people down here are being backed into a corner," said Ben DuVal, a farmer and president of the Klamath Water Users Association. "There's a lot of farms that need a good stable year this year — myself included — and we're not going to get that this year. I'm questioning the future."

The situation in the Klamath Basin was set in motion more than a century ago, when the U.S. government began drawing water from a network of shallow lakes and marshlands and funneling it into the dry desert uplands. Homesteads were offered by lottery to World War II veterans who grew hay, grain and potatoes and pastured cattle.

The project turned the region into an agricultural powerhouse — some of its potato farmers supply In 'N Out burger — but permanently altered an intricate water system that spans hundreds of miles from southern Oregon to Northern California.

In 1988, two species of sucker fish were listed as endangered under federal law, and less than a decade later, coho salmon that spawn downstream from the reclamation project, in the lower Klamath River, were listed as threatened.

The water necessary to sustain the coho salmon downstream comes from Upper Klamath Lake — the main holding tank for the farmers' irrigation system. At the same time, the sucker fish in the same lake need at least 1 to 2 feet (30 to 60 centimeters) of water covering the gravel beds that they use as spawning grounds.

In a year of extreme drought, there is not enough water to go around. Already this spring, the gravel beds that the sucker fish spawn in are dry and water gauges on Klamath River tributaries show the flow

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is the lowest in nearly a century. A decision late last summer to release water for irrigators, plus a hot, dry fall with almost no rain has compounded an already terrible situation.

"Given what I know about the hydrology, it's just impossible for them to make everyone happy," said Mike Belchik, a senior water policy analyst for the Yurok Tribe in Northern California. "There's just not enough water."

The Klamath Water Users Association sent a warning to its membership last week saying there would be "little to no water for irrigation from Upper Klamath Lake this year." It is holding a public meeting Wednesday to provide more information.

Meanwhile, sucker fish in the Upper Klamath Lake are hovering near dried-up gravel beds, fruitlessly waiting for water levels to rise so they can lay eggs, said Alex Gonyaw, a senior fisheries biologist for the Klamath Tribes.

"You can see them sort of milling around out in the lake water. They're desperately trying to get to this clean, constant lake water that they need," he said. "It's going to be like 2001. It's going to be, hopefully not catastrophic but very, very stressful for people and fish."

In 2001, the Bureau of Reclamation cut off water for 90 percent of the farms served by the Klamath Project when a drought cut water supply by two-thirds. The decision to do so went all the way to then-Vice President Dick Cheney and marked the first time farmers lost out to tribes and fish.

The water was held in Upper Klamath Lake for endangered sucker fish and allowed to run down the Klamath River for threatened coho salmon, rather than moving through the intricate series of canals to farms before dumping into wildlife refuges.

In previous severe droughts, including in the early 1990s, the federal government allowed more water to flow to farmers — a policy that contributed to the current crisis, said Jim McCarthy, of WaterWatch of Oregon.

Some are hoping this year's crisis will help all the interested parties hash out a water-sharing compromise that could save both the ecology and economy of the Klamath River Basin before it collapses entirely.

"This is the reality of climate change. This is it. We can't rely on historical water supplies anymore. We just can't," said Amy Cordalis, counsel for the Yurok Tribe and also a tribal member. "It's no one's fault. There's no bad guy here — but I think we'd all do well to pray for rain."

Major training: Biden dog gets help adjusting to White House

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden's dog Major will get professional help adjusting to the White House after a pair of biting incidents last month.

Private training for the 3-year-old German shepherd will be conducted "off-site" — not at the White House but in the Washington area, Michael LaRosa, a spokesperson for Jill Biden, said Monday in an emailed statement. The training is expected to last a few weeks, he said.

The Bidens also have a second German shepherd, 12-year-old Champ, at the White House. But it is the younger canine who has been the source of angst since both dogs were relocated to the White House in January from the Bidens' home in Delaware.

Last month, the White House confirmed that Major had nipped someone during a walk. Shortly before that incident, Major caused what the White House said was a minor injury to a Secret Service employee on March 8.

Both dogs spent time back in Delaware after the first incident — the White House said it was because the first lady would be traveling for a few days — and the president had said Major was being trained.

On National Pet Day on Sunday, Jill Biden tweeted photos of both dogs captioned, "Love these two!"

Russia puts feminist activist on trial for pornography

By DARIA LITVINOVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A feminist artist went on trial Monday in Russia on charges of disseminating pornogra-

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phy after she shared artwork online depicting female bodies. Human rights groups linked her prosecution to the Kremlin's conservative stance promoting "traditional family values."

The charges against activist Yulia Tsvetkova, 27, in the far eastern city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur have brought international outrage. She faces up to six years in prison on charges reportedly related to her group on the popular Russian social media network VKontakte, where stylized drawings of vaginas were posted. Tsvetkova is not allowed to disclose details of the criminal case against her.

The hearing comes a year and a half after she was first detained and eight months after Russian President Vladimir Putin signed constitutional amendments that outlawed same-sex marriage and tasked the government with "preserving traditional family values."

Tsvetkova's lawyer, Irina Ruchko, told reporters after the hearing that she maintains her innocence and the defense intends to prove it in court.

Tsvetkova ran a children's theater and was a vocal advocate of feminism and LGBT rights. She founded an online group called Vagina Monologues that encouraged followers to fight the stigma and taboos surrounding the female body, and posted other people's art in it.

Amnesty International last week called the case, which is being heard behind closed doors, "Kafkaesque absurdity" and urged Russian authorities to drop all charges. It said Tsvetkova was merely "expressing her views through art."

Tsvetkova's mother, Anna Khodyreva, echoed this sentiment in an interview with The Associated Press. "Yulia has always been against pornography. ... Feminists are against pornography because it's exploitation of women's bodies," she said.

Tsvetkova was detained in November 2019 and spent the next four months under house arrest. Her home was raided, along with her mother's education studio for children.

The activist was fined twice for violating Russia's law against disseminating gay "propaganda" to minors. The court ordered Tsvetkova to pay a fine of 50,000 rubles (\$780) in December 2019 for running an LGBT-themed online group, and 75,000 rubles (\$1,060) in July 2020 for a drawing in support of LGBT families. The second fine was later decreased to 50,000 rubles.

Many public figures have spoken out in her support, including Russian state TV veteran Vladimir Pozner. Activists across Russia have protested her prosecution, artists dedicated performances to her and an online petition demanding that the charges be dropped gathered over 250,000 signatures.

On Saturday, an exhibition of Tsvetkova's paintings opened in St. Petersburg.

"The snowball of censorship has started to bother the artistic community very much, and we understood that if we don't stand up for Yulia, don't support her, any other person can be next," artist Alexei Gorbushin, who organized and took part in performances in Tsvetkova's support, said at the exhibition.

The European Union's delegation to Russia tweeted the bloc "is closely following" the case against Tsvetkova and that "apparently, her persecution is related to her public position as an LGBT activist." The delegation called on Russian authorities to stop the prosecution.

In addition to pressure from authorities for the past two years, Khodyreva says she and her daughter have received death threats and were repeatedly harassed by strangers. Khodyreva's education studio for children has lost many clients. Tsvetkova's children's theater, Merak, no longer exists — frequent visits from law enforcement were too distressing for the children so it shut down, Khodyreva said.

"It is terrifying. I'm still looking back at the door even now," Khodyreva told the AP. "The police have barged in so many times that ... I'm not ready to have the children involved in this mayhem."

Tsvetkova's troubles started when the children's theater was preparing to show a play about gender stereotypes, titled "The Blues and the Pinks," in March 2019 at a theater festival she organized.

The festival lost two venues it found, Khodyreva said, and police questioned children involved in the play about whether Tsvetkova, who directed it, talked to them about LGBT issues. The play had nothing to do with LGBT issues — the name referred to colors traditionally associated with boys and girls — but in the 1990s, "blue" and "pink" in Russian were popular colloquialisms for gay men and women.

According to Khodyreva, police didn't talk to the children's parents, many of whom supported her and her daughter, and the contacts with police were traumatic for the theater's young students.

"We saw how bad the children felt. We saw how the boy who came up with the name for the play

cried, thinking it was his fault," Khodyreva said, adding that another boy who worried that he'd told police something about her daughter cried.

Tsvetkova was repeatedly summoned for interrogations. In March 2019, the activist said she was questioned about a series of her drawings called "A Woman is Not a Doll." The cartoonish depictions of naked or semi-clad women bore captions such as "Real women have hair on their bodies — and that's normal," "Real women have body fat — and that's normal." Police alleged the images were pornographic, Tsvetkova said in a VKontakte post.

Months later, she was detained and charged with disseminating pornography.

Russia's prominent human rights group Memorial has declared Tsvetkova a political prisoner. The group said her persecution was related to "her civic engagement and feminist views she didn't conceal and promoted through absolutely legal means as an activist and a contemporary artist" and the narrative of defending "traditional values" the Kremlin has embraced in a bid to tighten its grip on power.

Water-worried Vegas wants useless grass a thing of the past

By SAM METZ and KEN RITTER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A desert city built on a reputation for excess and indulgence wants to become a model for restraint and conservation with a first-in-the-nation policy banning grass that nobody walks on.

Las Vegas-area water officials have spent two decades trying to get people to replace thirsty greenery with desert plants, and now they're asking the Nevada Legislature to outlaw roughly 40% of the turf that's left.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority estimates there are almost 8 square miles (21 square kilometers) of "nonfunctional turf" in the metro area — grass that no one ever walks on or otherwise uses in street medians, housing developments and office parks.

They say this ornamental grass requires four times as much water as drought-tolerant landscaping like cactus and other succulents. By ripping it out, they estimate the region can reduce annual water consumption by roughly 15% and save about 14 gallons (53 liters) per person per day.

Las Vegas might be known for splashy displays like the Bellagio fountains on the neon-lit Strip, but officials say residents of bedroom communities and sprawling suburbs embrace conservation measures, including aggressive monitoring of sprinklers and leaky irrigation systems.

"The public perception outside of Las Vegas is certainly much different — and has been for a long time — than the water conservation ethic within the community," said Colby Pellegrino, Southern Nevada Water Authority water resources director.

California imposed a temporary ban on watering ornamental grass during last decade's drought, but no state or major city has tried to phase out certain categories of grass permanently.

"The scale of this is pretty unprecedented in terms of a full ban on this nonfunctional turf," said John Berggren, a water policy analyst at Western Resource Advocates.

The proposal is part of a turf war waged since at least 2003, when the water authority banned developers from planting green front yards in new subdivisions. It also offers owners of older properties the region's most generous rebate policies to tear out sod — up to \$3 per square foot.

Those efforts are slowing. The agency says the number of acres converted under its rebate program fell last year to six times less than what it was in 2008. Meanwhile, water consumption in southern Nevada has increased 9% since 2019.

Last year was among the driest in the region's history, when Las Vegas went a record 240 days without measurable rainfall. And the future flow of the Colorado River, which accounts for 90% of southern Nevada's water, is in question.

The waterway supplies Arizona, California, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Wyoming and Mexico. As drought and climate change decrease what the river provides, the amount allocated to Arizona, California and Nevada is projected to be cut further.

Justin Jones, a Clark County commissioner who serves on the water authority's board, doesn't think ripping out ornamental turf will upend people's lives.

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"To be clear, we are not coming after your average homeowner's backyard," he said. But grass in the middle of a parkway, where no one walks: "That's dumb."

"The only people that ever set foot on grass that's in the middle of a roadway system are people cutting the grass," Jones said.

The agency has different regulations for yards and public parks. Based on satellite imaging, it believes banning ornamental grass will primarily affect common areas maintained by homeowner associations and commercial property owners.

Jones said the proposal has drawn resistance in some master-planned communities, but water officials say years of drought-awareness campaigns and policies like the rebates have cultivated a cultural change.

Southern Nevada Homebuilders' Association lobbyist Matt Walker said consumer preferences have reached the point that potential homebuyers from wetter regions aren't turned off from neighborhoods that have parks but no ornamental grass.

Conservation frees water, reduces per capita consumption and strengthens builders' arguments that the desert can accommodate more growth, Walker said. "And the benefits are the ability to keep doing what we do, which is building homes."

"We've really gotten a comfort level that buyers are very much willing to go along with responsible development practices when it comes to water use," he added.

Other desert cities aren't so sure. Salt Lake City has an ordinance that requires a certain amount of yard and median greenery. Phoenix, where some neighborhoods remain lush from flood irrigation, has never offered grass removal rebates.

Water officials elsewhere are loath to compare their policies to southern Nevada. Particularly in cities where water consumption per person is high, they say there's no one-size-fits-all approach for a drier future.

Las Vegas, for example, mostly ignores toilets, showers and dishwashers because the water authority is able to treat and recycle indoor wastewater and let it flow through a natural wash into Lake Mead — the Colorado River reservoir behind Hoover Dam. It is filtered again for reuse.

A draconian anti-grass policy might not work in downtown Phoenix, said Cynthia Campbell, water resources adviser for the nation's fifth-largest city. Trees and grass blunt public health dangers of "urban heat islands" — areas lacking green landscaping to offset heat through evaporative cooling.

Regional water officials understand future consumption will have to be reduced but fear the preparation and perception could backfire if the community doesn't buy in.

"There comes a point when people's demands start to harden," Campbell said. "They'll say, 'This is the point of no return for me.' For some people, it's a pool. For some people, it's grass."

The Southern Nevada Water Authority isn't sure the idea of banning grass will spread to other cities. But Pellegrino, the water resources chief, said other places will have to make changes.

"Particularly every community that relies on Colorado River water."

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, April 13, the 103rd day of 2021. There are 262 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 13, 1970, Apollo 13, four-fifths of the way to the moon, was crippled when a tank containing liquid oxygen burst. (The astronauts managed to return safely.)

On this date:

In 1613, Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan, was captured by English Capt. Samuel Argall in the Virginia Colony. (During a yearlong captivity, Pocahontas converted to Christianity and ultimately opted to stay with the English.)

In 1742, "Messiah," the oratorio by George Frideric Handel featuring the "Hallelujah" chorus, had its first public performance in Dublin, Ireland.

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In 1743, the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, was born in Shadwell in the Virginia Colony.

In 1861, at the start of the Civil War, Fort Sumter in South Carolina fell to Confederate forces.

In 1870, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was incorporated in New York. (The original museum opened in 1872.)

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. on the 200th anniversary of the third American president's birth.

In 1964, Sidney Poitier became the first Black performer in a leading role to win an Academy Award for his performance in "Lilies of the Field."

In 1992, the Great Chicago Flood took place as the city's century-old tunnel system and adjacent basements filled with water from the Chicago River. "The Bridges of Madison County," a romance novel by Robert James Waller, was published by Warner Books.

In 1997, Tiger Woods became the youngest person to win the Masters Tournament and the first player of partly African heritage to claim a major golf title.

In 1999, right-to-die advocate Dr. Jack Kevorkian was sentenced in Pontiac, Michigan, to 10 to 25 years in prison for second-degree murder in the lethal injection of a Lou Gehrig's disease patient. (Kevorkian ended up serving eight years.)

In 2005, a defiant Eric Rudolph pleaded guilty to carrying out the deadly bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and three other attacks in back-to-back court appearances in Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta.

In 2015, a federal judge in Washington sentenced former Blackwater security guard Nicholas Slatten to life in prison and three others to 30-year terms for their roles in a 2007 shooting in Baghdad's Nisoor Square that killed 14 Iraqi civilians and wounded 17 others.

Ten years ago: Ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his two sons were detained for investigation of corruption, abuse of power and killings of protesters. A federal jury in San Francisco convicted baseball slugger Barry Bonds of a single charge of obstruction of justice, but failed to reach a verdict on the three counts at the heart of allegations that he'd knowingly used steroids and human growth hormone and lied to a grand jury about it. (Bonds' conviction for obstruction was ultimately overturned.)

Five years ago: A task force issued a report saying that Chicago police had "no regard for the sanctity of life when it comes to people of color." A judge in Fort Worth, Texas ordered 19-year-old Ethan Couch, who had used an "affluenza" defense in a fatal drunken-driving wreck, to serve nearly two years in prison. The Golden State Warriors became the NBA's first 73-win team by beating the Memphis Grizzlies 125-104, breaking the 1996 72-win record of the Chicago Bulls. Kobe Bryant of the Lakers scored 60 points in his final game, wrapping up 20 years in the NBA.

One year ago: President Donald Trump claimed "total" authority to decide how and when to reopen the economy after weeks of tough social distancing guidelines; governors from both parties quickly pointed out that they had primary responsibility for public safety in their states. Charles Thacker Jr., a crew member on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, died at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam, becoming the first active-duty military member to die from the coronavirus. "Good Morning America" host George Stephanopoulos revealed that he had tested positive for the coronavirus, but said he had been relatively symptom-free. Bernie Sanders urged his progressive supporters to rally behind Joe Biden's presidential campaign. The XFL, a spring professional football league backed by WWE, filed for bankruptcy. Sculptor and painter Glenna Goodacre, who created the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C., died in New Mexico at the age of 80.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., is 88. Actor Edward Fox is 84. Actor Paul Sorvino is 82. R&B singer Lester Chambers is 81. Movie-TV composer Bill Conti is 79. Rock musician Jack Casady is 77. Actor Tony Dow is 76. Singer Al Green is 75. Actor Ron Perlman is 71. Actor William Sadler is 71. Singer Peabo Bryson is 70. Bandleader/rock musician Max Weinberg is 70. Bluegrass singer-musician Sam Bush is 69. Rock musician Jimmy Destri is 67. Comedian Gary Kroeger is 64. Actor Sandra Santiago is 64. Sen. Bob Casey Jr., D-Pa., is 61. Chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov is 58. Actor Page Hannah is 57. Actor-comedian Caroline Rhea (RAY) is 57. Rock musician Marc Ford is 55. Reggae singer Capleton is 54.

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Actor Ricky Schroder is 51. Rock singer Aaron Lewis (Staind) is 49. Actor Bokeem Woodbine is 48. Singer Lou Bega is 46. Actor-producer Glenn Howerton is 45. Actor Kyle Howard is 43. Actor Kelli Giddish is 41. Actor Courtney Peldon is 40. Pop singer Nellie McKay (mih-KY') is 39. Rapper/singer Ty Dolla \$ign is 39. Actor Allison Williams is 33. Actor Hannah Marks is 28.