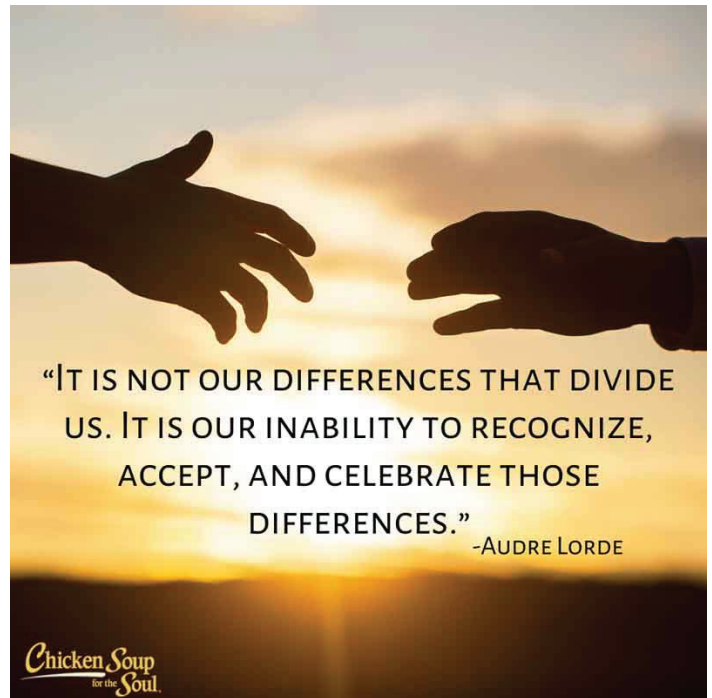


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## Schedule for 6-2-21 (all confirmed)

Legion vs Aberdeen Smitty's 7:00  
U8 SB @ Webster 6:00 (2) East end of Complex  
U8 Blue vs Watertown Munger 5:30 (2) Falk Field.



**CLOSED:** Recycling Trailer in Groton  
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

## **Adjustment made to airport lease; water surcharged passes first reading**

An adjustment to the Groton airport land lease was made due to the expansion of the airport. The farmable land was reduced from 105 acres to 95 acres. A modified lease was made up to reflect the change, reducing the cash rent by about \$1,800. In addition, a two-year extension on the amended lease agreement will be presented when the contract comes up in September. Grant Rix has the current lease.

The council approved a resolution for Kolker First Subdivision along the west side of the golf course property. The property will be sold off to the neighboring properties.

The council had previously passed a resolution passing on a water rate surcharge of \$7.85 per month. The rates are then put into the ordinance so the council had to pass a change in the ordinance to reflect the already passed resolution. It will take effect in July 1 and run through July of 2051. The money will be used to pay on the loan for an expanded water project to loop the Olson Development, for loop on the south edge of town and for the reservoir to be painted. Doug Hamilton asked why the whole town has to pay for a water loop across US 12 that only affects that part of town. Councilman David Blackmun agreed and that in the future, developers will need to make sure a water and electrical loop is put into place. It is something that planning and zoning will need to investigate. The motion to approve first reading on the water rate ordinance passed 3-2 with councilmen David Blackmun and Shirley Wells voting no.

The Legion donates \$500 for pool passes each year. Doug Hamilton said the \$500 should not go through Family Crisis. "We have enough confidence in the ladies up there to make the decisions." Councilman Karyn Babcock said if there is a denial or someone feels uncomfortable asking for help at the pool, they can apply through the city crisis fund for help as a backup.



**20% off Annuals  
or  
Fill a flat for a  
discounted rate**

**Tuesday-Friday this week.**

**Exclusions do apply (no planters, trees, shrubs, or perennials)  
We will be closing Friday June 4th at 4:30 for the year.**

**Weber Landscaping Greenhouse**  
West Third Avenue, Groton

## Groton Jr. Teeners Loses Lead Early In Defeat

Groton Jr. Teeners watched the game slip away early and couldn't recover in a 7-3 loss to Mobridge on Tuesday. Mobridge scored on a single by Kellen Pfitzer, a groundout by Gracie Faehurich, and a single by Jarrett Amdahl in the first inning.

Groton Jr. Teeners lost despite out-hitting Mobridge four to two.

Mobridge opened up scoring in the first inning. Pfitzer drove in one when Pfitzer singled.

Andrew Ulmer got the win for Mobridge. The hurler surrendered one run on three hits over three innings, striking out five and walking one. Pfitzer threw two innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Drew Thurston took the loss for Groton Jr. Teeners. The righthander went two-thirds of an inning, allowing four runs on two hits.

Brevin Flihs, Braxton Imrie, Korbin Kucker, and Kellen Antonsen all had one hit to lead Groton Jr. Teeners.

## Groton Jr. Teeners Holds Off Mobridge As 9-Run Deficit Is Nearly Erased

Groton Jr. Teeners got out to a nine-run lead in the third inning and held on for a 10-8 victory over Mobridge on Tuesday. Mobridge scored seven runs in the failed comeback. Kellen Pfitzer, Shane Henderson, Pfitzer, Andrew Ulmer, Brady Longbrake, and Jackson Eisemann came through with RBIs to lead the rally.

Bats blistered as Groton Jr. Teeners collected eight hits and Mobridge tallied four in the high-scoring game.

Mobridge scored four runs in the fifth inning. The big inning for Mobridge came thanks to by Pfitzer and Ulmer, a walk by Henderson, and a single by Longbrake.

Taylor Diegel took the win for Groton Jr. Teeners. The righty went four innings, allowing two runs on one hit and striking out ten. Gavin Englund and Jarrett Erdmann entered the game out of the bullpen and helped to close out the game in relief.

Eisemann took the loss for Mobridge. The pitcher lasted two innings, allowing three hits and six runs while striking out five.

Diegel went 2-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Jr. Teeners in hits.

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# Groton Transit

## FUNDRAISER

**Thursday, June 17, 2021**

**4 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

**Groton Community Transit**

**Downtown Groton**

*Tables will be set up outside*

*as in previous years!*

**We will be offering DRIVE-THRU**

**Service again on the**

**south side of the transit.**

*Please join us and help  
support Groton Transit!*

**FREE WILL OFFERING!**

**\* Food \* Fun \* Door Prizes \***



## Groton Legion Post #39 Clinches Lead In Sixth Inning For Victory Over Sisseton

Groton Legion Post #39 stole the lead late in the game in a 6-5 victory over Sisseton on Tuesday. The game was tied at four with Groton Legion Post #39 batting in the top of the sixth when Jackson Cogley doubled on a 2-1 count, scoring two runs.

Sisseton scored three runs in the third inning, but Groton Legion Post #39 still managed to pull out the victory. The big inning for Sisseton came thanks to a walk by Levi Greseth, an error on a ball put in play by Devan Appel, and a double by Jayden Fryer.

Groton Legion Post #39 got on the board in the first inning. Alex Morris grounded out, scoring one run.

Morris took the win for Groton Legion Post #39. The pitcher surrendered two runs on five hits over four and two-thirds innings, striking out 11 and walking one.

Isaiah Grimm took the loss for Sisseton. Grimm allowed eight hits and six runs over five and two-thirds innings, striking out six.

Pierce Kettering started the game for Groton Legion Post #39. The righty surrendered three runs on one hit over two and a third innings, striking out one.

Groton Legion Post #39 had nine hits in the game. Cogley, Jace Kroll, and Brodyn DeHoet all managed multiple hits for Groton Legion Post #39. DeHoet, Kroll, and Cogley each collected two hits to lead Groton Legion Post #39.

Sisseton collected six hits on the day. Fryer, Appel, and Ty Peterson each had multiple hits for Sisseton.

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## Help Wanted at Groton Area

The Groton Area School District is seeking qualified and motivated individuals for the following position for the 2021-2022 school year.

**Transportation Director.** The Groton Area School District has an opening for the position of Transportation Director. This position is full-time year round with a comprehensive benefits package and salary dependent on education and experience. Criminal background check and pre-employment drug test required. Applicant must hold valid South Dakota Commercial Driver License with School Bus and Passengers endorsements and clean driving record. Interested parties should complete and submit the auxiliary staff application form. Open until filled.

**Elementary Special Education Paraprofessional.** The Groton Area School District is seeking applicants for the position of Special Education Paraprofessional. Starting salary is \$12.10/hour and position includes comprehensive benefits package. Criminal background check required. Interested parties should complete and submit the auxiliary staff application form. Open until filled.

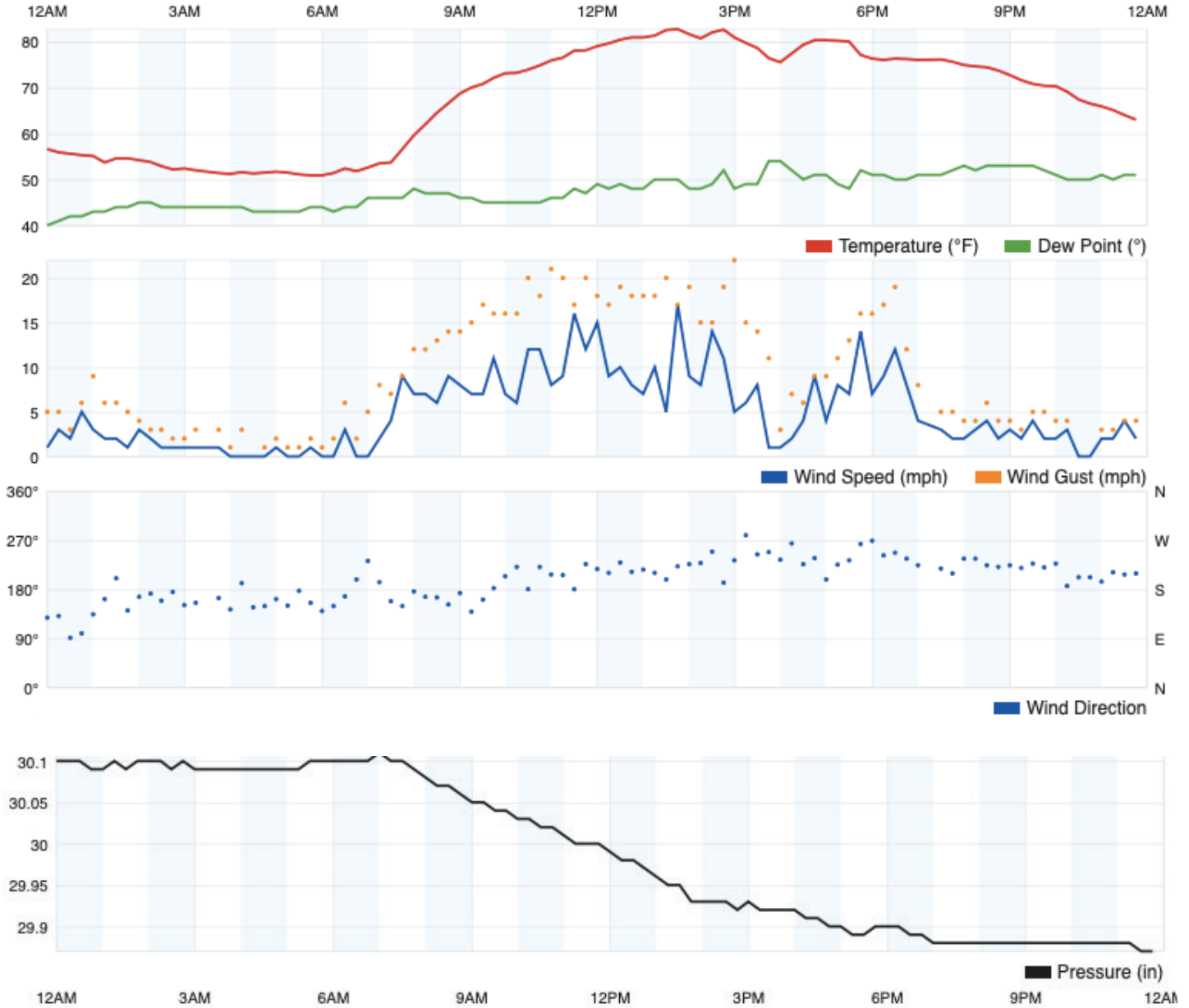
**MS/HS Special Education Paraprofessional.** The Groton Area School District is seeking applicants for the position of Special Education Paraprofessional. Starting salary is \$12.10/hour and position includes comprehensive benefits package. Criminal background check required. Interested parties should complete and submit the auxiliary staff application form. Open until filled.

Applications are available at [www.grotonarea.com](http://www.grotonarea.com) or at the district office – 502 N 2nd Street, Groton.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Today



Mostly Sunny

High: 87 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 59 °F

Thursday



Hot

High: 91 °F

Thursday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 65 °F

Friday



Hot

High: 97 °F

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
Updated: 6/2/2021 5:15 AM Central



## Warm the Rest of the Week

Wednesday  
HI: 80 to 90°



Thursday  
HI: 85 to 95°



Friday  
HI: 90 to 100°



Saturday  
HI: 90 to 100°



*Dry conditions expected*

Warm temperatures are expected for the rest of the week, with highs reaching the 90s, to around 100 degrees Friday through Saturday.

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ISSUED: 3:09 PM - Tuesday,  
June 01, 2021

## Potential Record Heat Friday/Saturday

Highs Around 20 Degrees Above Average

	Friday, June 5 <sup>th</sup>		Saturday, June 6 <sup>th</sup>	
	Forecast	Record	Forecast	Record
Aberdeen	97	101 /1933	99	103 /1933
Watertown	92	92 /1933	94	94 /2018
Pierre	97	94 /1939	98	99 /2018
Mobridge	98	95 /2017	98	97 /2018
Sisseton	97	95 /1934	99	96 /1939



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen South Dakota

Much above normal temperatures are headed towards the region for late this week and into the week-end. Here is a comparison between the forecast and records for Friday and Saturday

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## Today in Weather History

June 2, 1891: An estimated F3 tornado moved northeast, passing one mile south of Hazel in Hamlin County, where three people were killed in a barn. The farm home was entirely swept away. A horse was seen being carried in the air for 400 yards. The tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 5 miles.

After touching down, an estimated F2 tornado moved northeast along the eastern edge of Watertown, where a barn was destroyed, and debris was scattered for a half mile. Two homes were leveled 5 miles northeast of Watertown. Near Waverly, one person was injured in the destruction of a flour mill. This tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 15 miles.

June 2, 1964: Some bitter cold temperatures were observed during the early morning hours on the 2nd. Some low temperatures include; 27 degrees 12 miles SSW of Harrold; 28 degrees in Andover and 23 N of Highmore; 29 degrees 4 NW of Gann Valley, Redfield, and 2 NW of Stephan; 30 degrees in Castlewood and 1 W of Highmore; 31 degrees in Britton, 1 NW of Faulkton, and in Kennebec; and 32 degrees in McLaughlin.

June 2, 2008: Several supercell thunderstorms rolled southeast from northwest South Dakota into central South Dakota bringing large hail, damaging winds, and flash flooding during the late afternoon and evening hours. The large hail, up to baseball size, and high winds killed a large number of birds, pheasants, grouse, and rabbits. Thousands of acres of grassland and cropland along with many shelter belts received minor to major damage in Stanley and Hughes County. The large hail also knocked out many windows and damaged the siding of tens of buildings and homes in both Stanley and Hughes counties. Many roads and cropland were also affected by flash flooding throughout Hughes and Stanley counties. Very heavy rain of over 3 inches caused flash flooding in many parts of Pierre into the early morning hours. Many roads were reportedly flooded with 1 to 2 feet of water. Several homes in southeast Pierre received sewer backup. Also, several houses on Grey Goose Road received flood damage. A Federal Disaster Declaration was issued for Hughes and Stanley counties mainly for the flooding. Tennis ball hail broke most of the west side windows out of the house near Mission Ridge in Stanley County. Hail up to the size of baseballs fell in Pierre breaking some windows out of homes and vehicles. Very heavy rains of 2 to 4 inches fell across much of Stanley County causing extensive flash flooding. Seventeen roads also sustained some form of damage from the flooding.

1889: The same storm that caused the historic dam failure in Johnstown, PA, also affected Washington, D.C. The streets and reservations in the center of the city and all the wharves and streets along the riverfront were under water. Pennsylvania Avenue was flooded from 2nd to 10th Streets. The Potomac River crested at the Aqueduct Bridge at 19.5 feet on June 2. Additionally, damage occurred on Rock Creek, with the Woodley Lane Bridge washed away. Considerable damage occurred to machinery plants and material at the Navy Yard.

1917: The temperature at Tribune, Kansas dipped to 30 degrees to establish a state record for June.

1998: Frostburg, Maryland on June 2, 1998, at 9:45 PM - This was part of a killer outbreak of tornadoes that moved southeast from Pennsylvania. The storm entered Garrett County, Maryland striking the town of Finzel. It then moved up and over Big Savage Mountain in Allegany County and ripped through the northern portion of Frostburg. It reached its peak strength as it crossed the ridge. Winds were estimated between 210 and 250 mph (F4 on the Fujita Tornado Damage Scale). This was the first tornado to "officially" be rated an "F4" in the State of Maryland. The National Weather Service adopted the Fujita Damage Scale in 1973. The total damage path of the Frostburg tornado was over 25 miles long (8 miles in Allegany County) and up to a half-mile wide. Along most of its path, it was producing winds over 125 mph (F2 or stronger). The damage path was continuous as it moved up and down over 2000-foot mountain ridges. The fact that no one was killed in Maryland was attributed to 5 to 10 minutes warning that was well communicated to people in Frostburg over television, radio, scanners, telephones, and sirens. People took quick action to move to their basements. A mother and child rode out the storm as it destroyed their house hiding under a table in the basement. They were shaken but unharmed. A jacket from a Frostburg home was found 25 miles away. A diploma was found near Winchester, Virginia, 60 miles away and a bill was found near Sterling Virginia (about 100 miles away).



# Groton Daily Independent

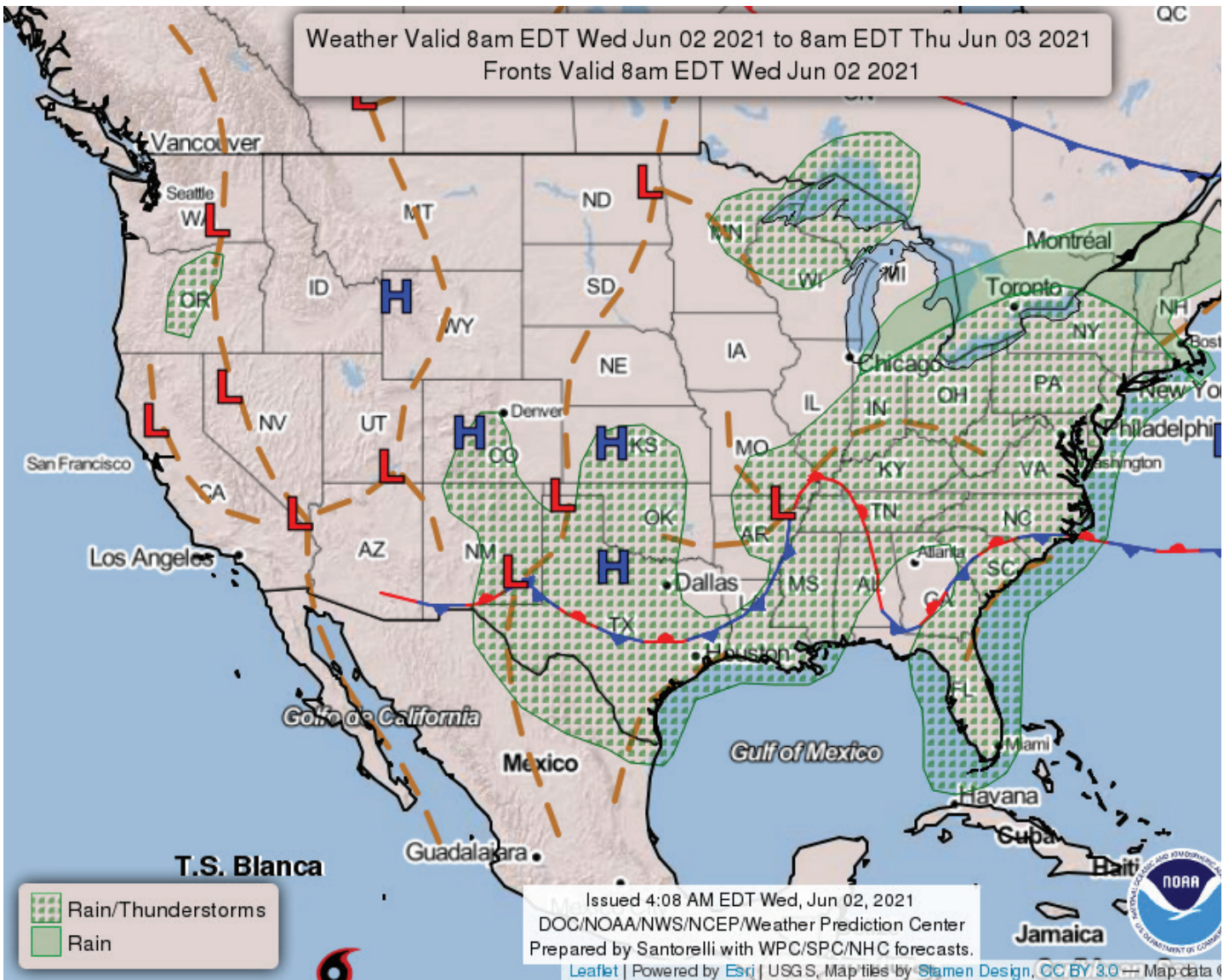
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 83 °F at 1:42 PM**  
**Low Temp: 51 °F at 6:03 AM**  
**Wind: 22 mph at 2:48 PM**  
**Precip: .00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 100° in 2017**  
**Record Low: 30° in 1946**  
**Average High: 77°F**  
**Average Low: 51°F**  
**Average Precip in June.: 0.10**  
**Precip to date in June.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 7.35**  
**Precip Year to Date: 3.97**  
**Sunset Tonight: 9:16 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:47 a.m.**



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## IS LIFE EVER FAIR?

"Why should Christians be good and help others and never get much wealth when so many who don't believe in God prosper and have so much?" he asked angrily. His wife died following a lengthy illness that drained all of the family's emotional, spiritual and financial resources. His resentment toward God, coupled with grief, was understandable. Most of us have experienced feelings like that to some degree.

However, let's think of Job for a moment. He was good, and his friends were evil. He experienced much pain and suffering while his friends seemed to enjoy the good things of life.

Then there is the story of Joseph. He was a good and decent man, and his "superior's" wife was not. She had him arrested on an unjust charge, and he was imprisoned.

Sometimes it seems as though being good has no reward. It is an end in itself. We receive no recognition or appreciation. Why bother?

That is when we need to recall the words of the Psalmist: "The people will say 'Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth.'"

Job's boils became his blessings, and if Joseph had not been a prisoner, he would not have become a prime minister.

God will take the worst events of our lives and ultimately transform them into our greatest blessings if we allow Him.

Prayer: Grant us patience, Father, knowing that You are as fair as You are faithful. Give us patience knowing You will turn our tragedies into triumphs. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Then people will say, "Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth." Psalm 58:11

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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  
06/17/2021 Groton Transit Fundraiser, 4-7 p.m.  
06/18/2021 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament at Olive Grove  
06/19/2021 U8 Baseball Tournament  
06/19/2021 Lions Crazy Golf Fest at Olive Grove Golf Course, Noon  
06/26/2021 U10 Baseball Tournament  
06/27/2021 U12 Baseball Tournament  
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

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

07-11-33-58-63, Mega Ball: 23, Megaplier: 2

(seven, eleven, thirty-three, fifty-eight, sixty-three; Mega Ball: twenty-three; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$34 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$268 million

### Groups: Walz's clean air plan hurts Minnesota border towns

MOORHEAD, Minn. (AP) — The Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce wants Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz to stop, or at least delay, his plan to impose new air emissions standards for vehicles in his state.

The North Dakota and Minnesota organization, along with about a dozen other border community groups, co-signed a May 25 letter to Walz outlining their concerns over his proposed "Clean Cars" policy.

"The considerable price increase caused by the rule would fall hardest on Minnesota's border communities. Auto dealers in our communities will incur a severe competitive disadvantage to dealers just across the border who have not adopted California's air emissions standards" according to the letter.

The organizations say the Minnesota Legislature should be involved in revising the policy, KVRRTV reported.

The Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber says dealers in Minnesota border cities sell up to 40% of new vehicles to residents of surrounding states.

"Neighbors from across our borders who might otherwise come to Minnesota to shop for a new vehicle would be highly unlikely to continue shopping here since vehicles will be significantly cheaper in Wisconsin, Iowa, and North and South Dakota," the groups said, adding that the issue is not about opposition to electric vehicles.

A spokesman for Walz did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

### Ethanol maker POET buys plants from Koch-owned Flint Hills

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — South Dakota-based ethanol company POET said Tuesday it has purchased the biofuels assets of Flint Hills Resources, including five ethanol plants in Iowa and one in Nebraska. The deal also includes ethanol distribution terminals in Texas and Georgia.

The purchase will allow POET, based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to increase its production to 33 biofuels production plants in eight states. It will have a capacity to produce 3 billion gallons annually.

"This acquisition will increase POET's ability to bring even more high-quality, plant-based biofuels and bioproducts to the world — allowing us to have an even bigger impact on fighting climate change and cleaning our air," said POET founder and CEO Jeff Broin.

The Iowa ethanol plants are in Arthur, Fairbank, Iowa Falls, Menlo and Shell Rock. The Nebraska plant is in Fremont, and the ethanol terminals are in Buda, Texas, and Camilla, Georgia.

Wichita, Kansas-based Flint Hills is a subsidiary of Koch Industries, and the transaction includes the subsidiary's entire biofuels portfolio. Flint Hills also has oil refineries and makes other products, including chemicals and asphalt.

POET also makes other products including distillers dried grains, a high protein animal feed and corn oil. Details of the transaction were not released.

Ethanol plants struggled and many closed during the height of the coronavirus pandemic as fewer people

drove cars, sending the sale of gasoline and the ethanol additive plummeting. Sales have since improved and production has increased.

## Midwest Economy: May state-by-state glance

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates growth in that factor over the next three to six months. A figure below 50 indicates decline.

Here are the state-by-state results for May:

**Arkansas:** The overall index for Arkansas decreased to 67.8 in May from 73.9 in April. Components of the survey were: new orders at 72.9, production or sales at 65.9, delivery lead time at 87.6, inventories at 60.7, and employment at 52.1. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for manufacturing production workers in Arkansas rose a hefty 6.1% over the last 12 months. Both durable goods producers and nondurable goods manufacturers in the state accounted for the very healthy gains," Goss said.

**Iowa:** Iowa's overall index rose to 70.2 in May from 67.9 in April. Components were: new orders at 72.7, production, or sales, at 65.7, delivery lead time at 86.7, employment at 53.9, and inventories at 74.6. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for manufacturing production workers rose 7.3% over the last 12 months. Wage gains were much healthier among nondurable goods producers than for durable goods manufacturers over the 12-month period," Goss said.

**Kansas:** The Kansas overall index for May fell to 71.8 from April's 75.0. Components were: new orders at 74.4, production or sales at 67.6, delivery lead time at 85.6, employment at 52.5, and inventories at 79.1. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for Kansas manufacturing production workers fell by 2.7% over the last 12 months. The state's durable goods producers, accounted for the losses, while nondurable goods manufacturers, experienced modest gains," Goss said.

**Minnesota:** The May overall index for Minnesota sank to 74.5 from 79.7 in April. Components were: new orders at 77.5, production or sales at 71.1, delivery lead time at 91.3, inventories at 65.6, and employment at 67.2. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Minnesota's average hourly wages for manufacturing production workers climbed by a solid 2.9% over the last 12 months. Both nondurable and durable goods producers in the state accounted for the gains," Goss said.

**Missouri:** Missouri's overall index decreased to 69.5 in May from 73.2 in April. Components of the survey were: new orders at 72.8, production or sales at 65.8, delivery lead time at 87.4, inventories at 66.9, and employment at 54.3. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for Missouri's manufacturing production workers climbed by a very healthy 7% with wage gains greater for durable goods producer than for nondurable goods producers," Goss said.

**Nebraska:** Nebraska's overall index for May dipped to 76.1 from 76.8 in April. Components of the survey were: new orders at 74.6, production or sales at 67.9, delivery lead time at 96.3, inventories at 82.3, and employment at 59.3. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for Nebraska's manufacturing production workers climbed by a modest 2.1% with wage gains for nondurable goods producers, but wage losses for durable goods manufacturers in the state," Goss said.

**North Dakota:** The May overall index for North Dakota bounced to 75.2 from 74.3 in April. Components were: new orders at 78.9, production or sales at 70.5, delivery lead time at 92.5, employment at 65.8, and inventories at 68.1. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, average hourly wages for North Dakota's manufacturing production workers climbed by a very strong 7.0% with gains somewhat larger for durable goods producers than non-durable goods manufacturers," Goss said.

**Oklahoma:** Oklahoma's overall index remained above growth neutral in May, falling to 68.9 from April's

70.9. Components were: new orders at 72.8, production or sales at 65.8, delivery lead time at 87.2, inventories at 64.7, and employment at 54.2. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Oklahoma's average hourly wages for manufacturing production workers climbed by a very strong 12.5% with gains somewhat larger for nondurable goods producers than durable goods manufacturers," Goss said.

South Dakota: The overall index for South Dakota climbed to 75.5 in May from 74.9 in April. Components were: new orders at 74.5, production or sales at 67.7, delivery lead time at 95.7, inventories at 80.8, and employment at 58.9. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, South Dakota average hourly wages for manufacturing production workers climbed by a very weak 0.2% with gains for nondurable goods producers, and slight wage losses for durable goods manufacturers," Goss said.

## Midwest economy report stays strong, shows inflation worries

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The economy in nine Midwest and Plains states remains strong in the wake of a devastating global pandemic, according to new monthly survey of business leaders and managers, but the survey's index gauging inflation soared to a new record high.

The Creighton University Mid-America Business Conditions for May released Tuesday came in at 72.3, down slightly from April's record high of 73.9.

Any score above 50 on the survey's indexes suggests growth, while a score below 50 suggests recession.

While the business leaders surveyed showed strong confidence in economic growth in the region over the next six months, the survey's wholesale inflation gauge for the month also surged to a record 96.3 from April's previous record of 96.2.

The survey showed nearly 1 in 3 supply managers naming rapidly rising input prices as their firm's greatest 2021 economic challenge.

"Since June of last year, metal prices have expanded by 20.8%, and lumber products have advanced by 63.1%, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data," said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey.

The survey showed the region's manufacturing sector added jobs at a modest pace, with nearly a quarter of manufacturers survey saying that finding and hiring qualified workers this year's greatest challenge. The shortage of workers is pushing up hourly manufacturing wages, Goss said.

The monthly survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

## First state-run veterans cemetery opens in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota has opened its first state-run veterans cemetery.

Construction on the cemetery began late in 2019 and culminated with a ribbon cutting on Memorial Day. The city of Sioux Falls donated 60 acres for the cemetery, which was funded with \$600,000 from the state and \$6 million from the federal government.

The cemetery is scheduled to begin interments this week. The first phase has space for more than 2,300 interments, including caskets, burial of cremains, a scattering garden and a columbaria, the Argus Leader reported.

The cemetery will eventually provide burial options for more than 28,000 veterans and their eligible dependents.

## Biden prioritizes US voting rights law as restrictions mount

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden used the 100th anniversary of Tulsa's race massacre to make a plea for sweeping legislation in Congress to protect the right to vote as Republican-led governments in Texas and other states pass new restrictions making it tougher to cast ballots.

Biden, marking the centennial in Oklahoma on Tuesday, called out lawmakers in Congress — including

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two senators in his own party — for holding up action on voting bills. Invoking the words of the late Rep. John Lewis, Biden said the right to vote is “precious” and must be protected. He vowed that June will be a “month of action” on Capitol Hill as Congress considers the legislation, among the top priorities of his administration.

“We’re not giving up,” Biden said about the bill, S.1. “I’m going to fight like heck with every tool at my disposal for its passage.”

Republican legislators in state capitols across the nation are pushing what experts say is an unprecedented wave of bills aimed at restricting access to the ballot box. While Republicans say the bills are aimed at preventing voter fraud, Democrats contend that the measures are aimed at undermining minority voting rights in particular.

Most recently, the Texas legislature moved closer to passing a bill that would reduce early voting hours, tighten voter identification requirements for absentee ballots and eliminate ballot drop boxes and drive-thru voting centers. The bill was blocked only when Texas Democrats walked off the House floor on Sunday night, but Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has said he’ll order a special session to ultimately ensure its passage.

Biden addressed the federal voting rights legislation during an event marking the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa race massacre, in which a white mob looted and burned Tulsa’s Greenwood district, which was known as “Black Wall Street.”

As many as 300 Black Tulsans were killed, and thousands of survivors were forced for a time into internment camps overseen by the National Guard. Biden said the nation must acknowledge the long-forgotten chapter of history to fully heal from it, and he pledged action on key issues confronting Black Americans, including police misconduct and restrictions on voting rights.

“We can’t just choose what we want to know, and not what we should know,” Biden said. “I come here to help fill the silence, because in silence wounds deepen.”

Despite Biden’s pledge to keep fighting to pass legislation protecting voting rights, however, he acknowledged Tuesday that his biggest obstacle may lie within his own party.

Biden called out two fellow Democrats in explaining why he hasn’t enacted some of the most ambitious elements of his agenda, noting that slim majorities in the House and evenly divided Senate have hamstrung legislative negotiations around key issues like voting rights.

Responding to critics who question why he hasn’t been able to get a wide-reaching voting rights bill passed, Biden lamented, “Well, because Biden only has a majority of effectively four votes in the House, and a tie in the Senate — with two members of the Senate who voted more with my Republican friends.”

It appeared to be a veiled reference to Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, both of whom have frustrated Democrats with their defense of the filibuster. The rule requires most legislation to win 60 votes to pass, making many of Democrats’ biggest priorities like voting rights and gun control dead on arrival in the 50-50 Senate. While Sinema is a sponsor of the voting rights bill that passed the House, known as the For the People Act, Manchin has refused to sign on, calling the measure “too broad.”

But it’s not just Manchin and Sinema who oppose doing away with the filibuster — as many as 10 Democratic senators are reluctant to change the rules even for must-pass legislation like the voting rights bill. Biden himself has not said he wants to end the filibuster.

It’s unclear whether Biden’s comments will change the views of any senators, who are facing tough choices ahead as pressure mounts on them.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., told colleagues that he would be bringing the voting rights bill to a vote the week of June 21, in effect testing where senators stand. Schumer warned in a letter to colleagues last week to brace for the month ahead.

“The June work period will be extremely challenging,” Schumer told them, adding that it would “test our resolve.”

Biden has tasked Vice President Kamala Harris with leading the administration’s efforts to defend voting rights, declaring that with her leadership, Americans will again “overcome” efforts to reduce access to



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voting, as they have in the past and did during the 2020 election, which saw record turnout despite new voting restrictions.

It adds another high-profile fight to Harris' fast-expanding portfolio, which includes addressing the root causes of migration from Central America, leading the National Space Council and working on expanding access to broadband internet.

In a statement, Harris said she plans to work with voting rights groups, community organizations and the private sector to strengthen voting rights, as well as push for passage of voting rights legislation on Capitol Hill.

"The work ahead of us is to make voting accessible to all American voters, and to make sure every vote is counted through a free, fair, and transparent process. This is the work of democracy," she said.

## Largest meat producer getting back online after cyberattack

By ROD McGUIRK and DEE-ANN DURBIN Associated Press Writers

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — The world's largest meat processing company is getting back online after production around the world was disrupted by a cyberattack just weeks after a similar incident shut down a U.S. oil pipeline.

Brazil's JBS SA said late Tuesday that it had made "significant progress" in dealing with the cyberattack and expected the "vast majority" of its plants to be operating on Wednesday.

"Our systems are coming back online and we are not sparing any resources to fight this threat," Andre Nogueira, CEO of JBS USA, said in a statement.

Earlier, the White House said JBS had notified the U.S. of a ransom demand from a criminal organization likely based in Russia. White House principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the White House and the Department of Agriculture have been in touch with the company several times this week.

JBS is the second-largest producer of beef, pork and chicken in the U.S. If it were to shut down for even one day, the U.S. would lose almost a quarter of its beef-processing capacity, or the equivalent of 20,000 beef cows, according to Trey Malone, an assistant professor of agriculture at Michigan State University.

The closures reflect the reality that modern meat processing plants are heavily automated, for both food- and worker-safety reasons. Computers collect data at multiple stages of the production process, and orders, billing, shipping and other functions are all electronic.

JBS, which has not stated publicly that the attack was ransomware, said the cyberattack affected servers supporting its operations in North America and Australia. Backup servers weren't affected and it said it was not aware of any customer, supplier or employee data being compromised.

JBS plants in Australia resumed limited operations as of Wednesday in New South Wales and Victoria states, Agriculture Minister David Littleproud said. The company hoped to resume work in Queensland state on Thursday, he said.

JBS is the largest meat and food processing company in Australia, with 47 facilities including abattoirs, feedlots and meat processing sites.

Littleproud said his department and Australian law enforcement officials were due to meet with their counterparts in the U.S. on Wednesday.

Even before the attack, U.S. meat prices were rising due to coronavirus shutdowns, bad weather and high plant absenteeism. Malone said the disruption could further raise meat prices ahead of summer barbecues. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates beef prices will climb 1%-2% this year, poultry as much as 1.5% and pork 2%-3%.

JBS, which is a majority shareholder of Pilgrim's Pride, didn't say which of its 84 U.S. facilities were closed Monday and Tuesday because of the attack. It said JBS USA and Pilgrim's were able to ship meat from nearly all of its facilities Tuesday. The company also said it was making progress toward resuming plant operations in the U.S. and Australia. Several of the company's pork, poultry and prepared foods plants were operational Tuesday and its Canada beef facility resumed production, it said.

Earlier Tuesday, a union official confirmed that two shifts at the company's largest U.S. beef plant, in

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Greeley, Colorado, were canceled. Some plant shifts in Canada were also canceled Monday and Tuesday, according to JBS Facebook posts.

Jean-Pierre said the White House "is engaging directly with the Russian government on this matter and delivering the message that responsible states do not harbor ransomware criminals." The FBI is investigating the incident, and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is offering technical support to JBS.

In addition, USDA has spoken to several major meat processors in the U.S. to alert them to the situation, and the White House is assessing any potential impact on the nation's meat supply.

JBS has more than 150,000 employees worldwide.

It's not the first time a ransomware attack has targeted a food company. Last November, Milan-based Campari Group said it was the victim of a ransomware attack that caused a temporary technology outage and compromised some business and personal data.

In March, Molson Coors announced a cyber attack that affected its production and shipping. Molson Coors said it was able to get some of its breweries running after 24 hours; others took several days.

Ransomware expert Brett Callow, a threat analyst at the security firm Emsisoft, said companies like JBS make ideal targets.

"They play a critical role in the food supply chain and threat actors likely believe this increases their chances of getting a speedy payout," Callow said.

Mark Jordan, who follows the meat industry as the executive director of Leap Market Analytics, said the disruption would be minimal if JBS recovers in the next few days. Meat processors are accustomed to delays because of various factors including industrial accidents and power outages. They make up for lost production with extra shifts, he said.

"Several plants owned by a major meatpacker going offline for a couple of days is a major headache, but it is manageable assuming it doesn't extend much beyond that," he said.

U.S. meat demand generally eases for a few weeks between Memorial Day and the July 4 Independence Day holiday.

But such attacks can wreak havoc. Last month, a gang of hackers shut down operation of the Colonial Pipeline, the largest U.S. fuel pipeline, for nearly a week. The closure sparked long lines and panic buying at gas stations across the Southeast. Colonial Pipeline confirmed it paid \$4.4 million to the hackers.

Jason Crabtree, the co-founder of QOMPLX, a Virginia-based artificial intelligence and machine learning company, said Marriott, FedEx and others have also been targeted by ransomware attacks. He said companies need to do a better job of rapidly detecting bad actors in their systems.

"A lot of organizations aren't able to find and fix different vulnerabilities faster than the adversaries that they're fighting," Crabtree said.

Crabtree said the government also plays a critical role, and said President Joe Biden's recent executive order on cybersecurity — which requires all federal agencies to use basic security measures, like multi-factor authentication — is a good start.

## Herzog, scion of prominent Israeli family, elected president

By ILAN BEN ZION Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Isaac Herzog, a veteran politician and the scion of a prominent Israeli family, was elected president Tuesday, a largely ceremonial role that is meant to serve as the nation's moral compass and promote unity.

The anonymous vote was held among the 120 members of the Knesset, or parliament. Herzog will be Israel's 11th president, succeeding Reuven Rivlin, who is set to leave office next month after seven years in office.

Herzog, 60, is a former head of Israel's Labor Party and opposition leader who unsuccessfully ran against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the 2015 parliamentary elections.

He comes from a prominent Zionist family. His father, Chaim Herzog, was Israel's ambassador to the United Nations before being elected president. His uncle, Abba Eban, was Israel's first foreign minister and



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ambassador to the United Nations and United States. His grandfather was the country's first chief rabbi. Herzog defeated Miriam Peretz, 67, an educator who was seen as a down-to-earth outsider close to the country's dominant conservative and nationalist political camp.

Herzog has served as head of the Jewish Agency, a nonprofit that works closely with the government to promote immigration to Israel, for the past three years since resigning from parliament. He was widely seen as the favorite because of his deep ties to the political establishment. He will hold office for a single seven-year term starting July 9.

The president is tasked with tapping a political party leader to form governing coalitions after parliamentary elections. Israel has held four national elections in the past two years amid a protracted political crisis.

Netanyahu's opponents faced a midnight deadline Wednesday to put together a new coalition government. If they fail, the country could be plunged into another election campaign.

The president also has the power to grant pardons — creating a potentially sensitive situation as Netanyahu stands trial for a series of corruption charges.

Peretz immigrated from Morocco as a child and has worked as a teacher, educator and lecturer on Judaism, Zionism and grief. Two of her sons died serving in the Israeli military. In 2018 she was awarded the Israel Prize, the country's top award, for lifetime achievement.

She would have been the first woman and the first settler to hold the office.

She and her family lived in one of Israel's settlements in the Sinai Peninsula until a peace treaty was struck with Egypt in 1979 and the territory was returned. Peretz then moved to the settlement of Givat Zeev, in the occupied West Bank just north of Jerusalem.

Most of the world considers Israel's West Bank settlements illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians, who seek the territory as part of a future state.

## Iran's largest warship catches fire, sinks in Gulf of Oman

By AMIR VAHDAT and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — The largest warship in the Iranian navy caught fire and later sank Wednesday in the Gulf of Oman under unclear circumstances, semiofficial news agencies reported.

The Fars and Tasnim news agencies said efforts failed to save the support warship Kharg, named after the island that serves as the main oil terminal for Iran.

The blaze began around 2:25 a.m. and firefighters tried to contain it, Fars said. The vessel sank near the Iranian port of Jask, some 1,270 kilometers (790 miles) southeast of Tehran on the Gulf of Oman near the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf.

Photos circulated on Iranian social media of sailors wearing life jackets evacuating the vessel as a fire burned behind them. State TV and semiofficial news agencies referred to the 207-meter (679 foot) Kharg as a "training ship." Fars published video of thick, black smoke rising from the ship early Wednesday morning.

Satellite photos from Planet Labs Inc. analyzed by The Associated Press showed the Kharg off to the west of Jask on Tuesday. Satellites from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that track fires from space detected a blaze at the site of the Jask that started just before the time of the fire reported by Fars.

The Kharg serves as one of a few vessels in the Iranian navy capable of providing replenishment at sea for its other ships. It also can lift heavy cargo and serve as a launch point for helicopters. The warship, built in Britain and launched in 1977, entered the Iranian navy in 1984 after lengthy negotiations that followed Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iran's navy typically handles patrols in the Gulf of Oman and the wider seas, while the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard operates in the shallower waters of the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. In recent months, however, the navy launched a slightly larger commercial tanker called the Makran it converted into serving a similar function as the Kharg.

Iranian officials offered no cause for the fire aboard the Kharg. However, it comes after a series of mysterious explosions that began in 2019 targeting ships in the Gulf of Oman. The U.S. Navy later accused Iran

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of targeting the ships with limpet mines, timed explosives typically attached by divers to a vessel's hull. Iran denied targeting the vessels, though U.S. Navy footage showed Revolutionary Guard members removing one unexploded limpet mine from a vessel. The incidents came amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

In April, an Iranian ship called the MV Saviz believed to be a Guard base and anchored for years in the Red Sea off Yemen was targeted in an attack suspected to have been carried out by Israel. It escalated a yearslong shadow war in Mideast waters between the two countries.

The sinking of the Kharg marks the latest naval disaster for Iran. In 2020 during an Iranian military training exercise, a missile mistakenly struck a naval vessel near the port of Jask, killing 19 sailors and wounding 15. Also in 2018, an Iranian navy destroyer sank in the Caspian Sea.

## Charges after US Capitol insurrection roil far-right groups

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press  
Indictments. Infighting. Incarceration.

Former President Donald Trump's lies about a stolen 2020 election united right-wing supporters, conspiracy theorists and militants on Jan. 6, but the aftermath of the insurrection is roiling two of the most prominent far-right extremist groups at the U.S. Capitol that day.

More than three dozen members and associates across both the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers have been charged with crimes. Some local chapters cut ties with national leadership in the weeks after the deadly siege. The Proud Boys' chairman called for a pause in the rallies that often have led to clashes with anti-fascist activists. And one Oath Keeper has agreed to cooperate against others charged in the riot.

Some extremism experts see parallels between the fallout from the Capitol riot and the schisms that divided far-right figures and groups after their violent clashes with counter-protesters at the "Unite the Right" white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017. The white supremacist "alt-right" movement fractured and ultimately faded from public view after the violence erupted that weekend.

"I think something kind of like that is happening right now in the broader far-right movement, where the cohesive tissue that brought them all together — being the 2020 election — it's kind of dissolved," said Jared Holt, a resident fellow at the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab.

"Like 'Unite the Right,' there is a huge disaster, a P.R. disaster, and now they've got the attention of the feds. And it's even more intense now because they have the national security apparatus breathing down their necks," he added.

But others believe President Joe Biden's victory and the Jan. 6 investigation, the largest federal prosecution in history, might animate the militia movement — fueled by an anti-government anger.

"We're already seeing a lot of this rhetoric being spewed in an effort to pull in people," said Freddy Cruz, a Southern Poverty Law Center research analyst who studies anti-government groups. "It's very possible that people will become energized and try to coordinate more activity given that we have a Democratic president in office."

The insurrectionists who descended on the nation's capital briefly disrupted the certification of Biden's presidential win and sent terrified lawmakers running for their lives.

The mob marched to the Capitol and broke through police barricades and overwhelmed officers, violently shoving their way into the building to chants of "Hang Mike Pence" and "Stop the Steal." Some rioters came prepared with pepper spray, baseball bats and other weapons.

Members of the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers make up just a small fraction of the more than 400 people charged so far. Prosecutors have narrowed in on the two extremist groups as they try to determine how much planning went into the attack, but authorities have said they're intent on arresting anyone involved in the riot.

More than two dozen Proud Boys leaders, members or associates are among those arrested. The group of self-described "Western chauvinists" emerged from far-right fringes during the Trump administration

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to mainstream GOP circles, with allies like longtime Trump backer Roger Stone. The group claims it has more than 30,000 members nationwide.

In the sustained protests last summer over police brutality, their counter demonstrations often devolved into violence. Law enforcement stepped in during a protest in Michigan. Members were accused of vandalizing property in Washington, D.C. Then, during a presidential debate with Biden, the group gained greater notoriety after Trump refused to condemn white supremacist groups and told the Proud Boys directly to "stand back and stand by."

Chairman Henry "Enrique" Tarrío hasn't been charged in the riot. He wasn't there on Jan. 6. He'd been arrested in an unrelated vandalism case as he arrived in Washington two days before the insurrection and was ordered out of the area by a judge. Law enforcement later said Tarrío was picked up in part to help quell potential violence.

Tarrío insists the criminal charges haven't weakened or divided the group. He says he has met with leaders of chapters that declared their independence and patched up their differences.

"We've been through the wringer," Tarrío said in an interview. "Any other group after January 6th would fall apart."

But leaders of several local Proud Boys chapters, including in Seattle, Las Vegas, Indiana and Alabama, said after Jan. 6 that their members were cutting ties with the organization's national leadership. Four leaders, including national Elders Council member Ethan Nordean, have been charged by federal officials with planning and leading an attack on the Capitol. One of Nordean's attorneys said he wasn't responsible for any crimes committed by other people.

The Las Vegas chapter's statement on the instant messaging platform Telegram in February didn't mention Jan. 6 directly, but it claimed the "overall direction of the organization" was endangering its members.

The Alabama group expressed concern about reports that Tarrío had previously been a federal informant. It was revealed in court records recently that Tarrío had worked undercover and cooperated with investigators after he was accused of fraud in 2012.

"We reject and disavow the proven federal informant, Enrique Tarrío, and any and all chapters that choose to associate with him," the Alabama group posted online in February.

Tarrío said he suspended national Proud Boy rallies shortly after Jan. 6 in part to focus on helping members facing criminal charges. Tarrío described Jan. 6 as "horrible" but said authorities overcharged his jailed lieutenants and are politically persecuting them.

Meanwhile, 16 members and associates of the Oath Keepers — a militia group founded in 2009 that recruits current and former military, police and first responders — have been charged with conspiring to block the certification of the vote. The group's founder and leader, Stewart Rhodes, has said there were as many as 40,000 Oath Keepers at its peak, but one extremism expert estimates the group's membership stands around 3,000 nationally.

Rhodes has not been charged, and it's unclear if he will be. But he has repeatedly come up in court documents as "Person One," suggesting he's a central focus of investigators.

Days after the election, Rhodes instructed his followers during a GoToMeeting call to go to Washington to let Trump know "that the people are behind him," and he expressed hope that Trump would call up the militia to help the president stay in power, authorities say. Rhodes warned they could be headed for a "bloody, bloody civil war, and a bloody — you can call it an insurrection or you can call it a war or fight," according to court documents.

On Jan. 6, several Oath Keepers, wearing helmets and reinforced vests, were seen on camera shouldering their way up the Capitol steps in a military-style stack formation. Rhodes was communicating that day with some Oath Keepers who entered the Capitol and was seen standing with several of the defendants outside the building after the riot, prosecutors say.

Rhodes has sought to distance himself from those who've been arrested, insisting the members went rogue and there was never a plan to enter the Capitol. But he has continued in interviews with right-wing hosts since Jan. 6 to push the lie that the election was stolen, while the Oath Keepers website remains

active with posts painting the group as the victim of political persecution.

Messages left at numbers listed for Rhodes weren't immediately returned.

Court documents show discord among the group as early the night of the attack. Someone identified in the records only as "Person Eleven" blasted the Oath Keepers in a Signal chat with Rhodes and others as "a huge f—n joke" and called Rhodes "the dumbass I heard you were," court documents say.

Two months later, Rhodes lamented in a message to another Oath Keeper that the national team had gotten "too lax" and "too complacent." He pledged to "tighten up the command and control" in the group — "even if it means losing some people," according to court documents.

After the riot, the North Carolina Oath Keepers branch said it was splitting from Rhodes' group. Its president, who didn't return messages from the AP, told The News Reporter newspaper it wouldn't be "a part of anything that terrorizes anybody or goes against law enforcement."

A leader of an Arizona chapter also slammed Rhodes and those facing charges, saying on CBS' "60 Minutes" that the attack "goes against everything we've ever taught, everything we believe in."

The Oath Keepers' leader has also suggested the group may be facing financial pressures. In an interview posted on the Oath Keepers' website, Rhodes said it has been difficult for the group to raise money as it's been kicked off certain websites.

The group also lost the ability to process credit card payments online after the company demanded that Rhodes disavow the arrested members and he refused, Rhodes said in a March interview for far-right website Gateway Pundit. The Oath Keepers website now says it cannot accept new memberships online because of "malicious leftist attacks" and instructs people to mail in applications and dues.

A member of the Oath Keepers was the first defendant to plead guilty in the riot. Jon Ryan Schaffer has also agreed to cooperate with the government's investigation. The Justice Department has promised to consider putting him in the witness security program, suggesting it sees him as a valuable cooperator in the Jan. 6 probe.

## The Latest: Oslo virus surge linked to high school parties

By The Associated Press undefined

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — At least 540 people are in quarantine after a coronavirus outbreak in the Norwegian capital of Oslo tied to traditional celebrations for high school seniors who drive around in buses and drink.

The celebrations, known as russ in Norwegian, are a major cultural phenomenon across the Scandinavian country. Participants wear colored overalls and matching caps, with some buying a used vehicle — a bus, a van or a car — which they scribble on with paint and drive around in. Drunkenness and public disturbances are often linked to the celebration.

Jorunn Thaulow, responsible for the infection tracing team in the western part of Oslo, told the Avisa Oslo newspaper that most of the cases are related to five buses used by the partying students. She said it's affecting almost all high schools in the western part of Oslo, which has nearly 700,000 residents.

Norway shortly will begin to vaccinate people between 18 and 44.

### MORE ON THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

- London's Heathrow creates separate terminal for arriving high-risk passengers
- Sinovac vaccine restores one Brazilian city to near normal
- Greece, Germany and five other EU nations kick off a common vaccine certificate to speed travel across the bloc and jump start the summer tourism season
- Peru raises COVID-19 death toll sharply, up to over 180,000 from previous count of nearly 70,000
- Japan's vaccine push ahead of the Summer Olympics looks to be too late

— Follow more of AP's pandemic coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic> and <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-vaccine>



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## HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

**WARSAW, Poland** – Poland's plummeting numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths have allowed the government to ease more restrictions and allow for conferences and exhibitions, indoor playgrounds and higher attendance at family events like weddings.

Health Minister Adam Niedzielski said Wednesday latest figures show that the pandemic is "easing off," allowing for the new rules to take effect Sunday for a two-week trial period.

Conferences, fairs and trade exhibitions can be organized, and indoor playgrounds can open, provided there are no more than one person per 15 sq. meters (160 sq. feet.) The limit of people allowed at entertainment and family events was raised to 150, from previous 50, with fully vaccinated people not counting in that limit. However, discos remain closed.

Also, public transport can now fill to 75% of capacity, up from the previous 50% of capacity, but masks remain obligatory.

Poland's average daily number of infections has gone under 1,000 and of deaths is under 100, compared to almost 30,000 new daily infections and over 700 deaths in April. Some 7.3 million Poles are fully vaccinated, and another 13 million have received the first jab.

**MELBOURNE, Australia** — A pandemic lockdown in Australia's second largest city will be extended for a second week due to concerns over a growing cluster of coronavirus infections.

Victoria state acting Premier James Merlino on Wednesday confirmed that Melbourne will remain in lockdown for seven more days from Friday, but pandemic restrictions will be eased elsewhere in the state.

Merlino says that "if we let this thing run its course, it will explode."

Victoria officials said Wednesday that the state recorded six new locally acquired coronavirus cases, bringing the latest outbreak to 60 active infections. The lockdown is the fourth for Melbourne, which has 5 million residents.

**MEXICO CITY** — Mexico says a clinical review of past deaths has led officials to raise the country's confirmed COVID-19 death toll by 4,272, to a total of 227,840.

The adjustment announced Tuesday is largely one of record keeping, because even government officials acknowledge the true death toll is far higher.

Because the country of 126 million people does so little testing, many Mexicans have died at home or never got a test. So the government searches death certificates for mentions of symptoms related to COVID-19.

Those analyses of excess deaths related to COVID-19 now stand at over 348,750, which gives Mexico one of the highest per capita rates in the world.

**JUNEAU, Alaska** — Alaska has begun offering coronavirus vaccinations at airports in a move that had been expected for the start of the summer travel season.

The state health department said as of Tuesday, vaccine eligibility has been expanded to include anyone in Alaska who is at least 12 years old, including visitors from other states or countries. Prior eligibility was for those who live or work in Alaska.

Vaccines will be offered outside the areas secured by the federal Transportation Security Administration at airports in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau.

**INDIANAPOLIS** — Indiana University modified its COVID-19 vaccination requirement, making it optional that students and employees provide proof of getting the shots as school officials changed a policy that had drawn protests from many state officials.

Indiana University said under the revised requirement students and employees would be able to attest to their vaccination without having to provide immunization documentation as was required under the

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previous policy.

The university also said a form would be available Wednesday for those requesting vaccine exemptions for medical or religious reasons.

President Michael McRobbie said the university's primary concern has been ensuring the health and safety of its students and staff. He added: "This requirement will make a 'return to normal' a reality for the fall semester."

The changes come after the state attorney general issued last week a non-binding opinion that the policy was illegal under a new state law banning state or local governments from requiring vaccine passports.

**TORONTO** — Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization says people who got the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine for the first dose can be offered either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna for the second.

The advice affects more than two million Canadians who received the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine before provinces stopped using it for first doses last month.

The vaccine is potentially linked to a rare but serious blood clotting syndrome. In Canada, 41 confirmed or suspected cases of vaccine-induced thrombotic thrombocytopenia have been diagnosed and five people have died.

Several European countries are giving Pfizer or Moderna as second doses to AstraZeneca recipients, including Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Sweden, Norway and Spain.

NACI's published report says AstraZeneca recipients can be offered the same vaccine if they want it, or can be given either Pfizer or Moderna. The guidance is not binding but most provincial governments have indicated they were waiting for the information before setting their policies.

**NEW YORK** — Health researchers estimate that during the early months of the U.S. COVID-19 epidemic, 7,000 to 10,000 more kidney disease patients died than normally would.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published the report Tuesday.

The researchers focused on about 800,000 patients who early last year had kidney failure. About 60,000 of them died between the beginning of February and the end of August last year.

The researchers compared those numbers to trends in the same patient population during other recent years, and concluded such deaths had risen by as much as 10,000. Patterns of where the patients died were similar to maps of where COVID-19 hit the United States in the first months of the pandemic. But the authors say more research is needed to determine what drove the increase – whether it was due to coronavirus infections, difficulty accessing medical care or other reasons.

Overall, between Feb. 1, 2020 and May 15, 2021, the CDC reports that the nation saw about 643,000 more deaths than usual.

**WASHINGTON** — The Memorial Day weekend has produced the two busiest days for U.S. air travel since early March 2020.

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration said about 1.96 million people passed through U.S. airport security checkpoints on Friday, and 1.90 million did so on Monday. Tuesday was also expected to be busy, as travelers returned home after the Memorial Day weekend.

Analysts expect travel to continue rising slowly now that many Americans are vaccinated against COVID-19 and airlines are adding more flights.

In May, an average of 1.6 million people a day were screened at U.S. airports, down one-third from the 2.4 million people a day who went through TSA checkpoints in May 2019.

**LONDON** — London's Heathrow Airport has reopened a terminal that was mothballed during the coronavirus pandemic to handle passengers now arriving from high-risk countries. Critics say the action should have been taken sooner.

Britain has barred travelers from a "red list" of 43 coronavirus hotspots including India, Brazil and Tur-



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key. U.K. nationals and residents returning from those countries face a mandatory 10-day quarantine in a hotel. Other travelers coming from “amber list” countries like the United States can do their mandatory 10-day quarantine at home in the U.K.

Critics have complained that red list passengers have been using the same massive airport arrivals hall as travelers from other destinations, though in separate lines, since the hotel quarantines were introduced in February.

Starting Tuesday, red list arrivals will pass through the airport’s Terminal 3, which was closed in April 2020 as international air travel plummeted.

**GENEVA** — The World Health Organization has issued an emergency use listing for the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinovac in adults aged 18 and over, the second such authorization it has granted to a Chinese company.

The U.N. health agency said Tuesday that data submitted to its experts showed that two doses of the vaccine prevented people from getting symptoms of COVID-19 in about half of those who got the vaccine. WHO said there were few older adults enrolled in the research, so it could not estimate how effective the vaccine was in people over age 60.

WHO’s authorization means the vaccine can be bought by donors and other U.N. agencies for use in poorer countries, including in the U.N.-backed initiative to distribute COVID-19 vaccines globally known as COVAX.

Last month, WHO gave the green light to the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinopharm. It has also licensed vaccines developed by Pfizer-BioNTech, Johnson & Johnson, Moderna Inc and AstraZeneca.

**LONDON** — Britain’s government said no new coronavirus deaths were reported Tuesday, the first time this has happened since July 2020.

The positive news came amid concern about increasing cases in the U.K. of the coronavirus variant first identified in India, and uncertainty about whether authorities will press ahead with the final stages of easing social restrictions later this month.

As of Tuesday there have been a further 3,165 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the U.K., compared to about 2,500 cases last week. Some parts of northwestern England have seen a steep rise in infections. Officials have said that up to three-quarters of these new cases are the variant first found in India, which they say appear to be more transmissible.

Official figures showed no deaths within 28 days of testing positive for the coronavirus were reported Tuesday. The U.K. total death toll stood at 127,782, the highest in Europe.

**GENEVA** — The European Medicines Agency has recommended approving two additional manufacturing and finishing sites for the coronavirus vaccine made by Pfizer and BioNTech.

The EU drug regulator said Tuesday that the additional vaccine production and filling sites were at Pfizer’s factory in Puurs, Belgium. The EMA said its decision, based on a review of manufacturing data submitted by BioNTech, is expected to have “a significant and immediate impact” on the supply of the vaccine for the 27 countries in the EU made by Pfizer and BioNTech.

Last month, the EU Commission signed a third contract with Pfizer-BioNTech to obtain an additional 1.8 billion doses of their vaccine from 2021 to 2023. That contract stipulated that vaccine production be based in the EU and that delivery to the EU be guaranteed in 2022.

In April, the EU sued AstraZeneca for its failure to deliver on the hundreds of millions of doses Europe had been promised in its contract.

## Gaza’s bereaved civilians fear justice will never come

By KARIN LAUB and FARES AKRAM Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — The al-Kawlaks, a family of four generations living next door to each

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other in downtown Gaza City, were utterly unprepared for the inferno.

Like others, they were terrified by the heavy bombing in Israel's fourth war with Gaza's Hamas rulers that began May 10. The explosions felt more powerful than in previous fighting. At night, parents and children slept in one room so they would live or die together.

Yet the relatively well-to-do Rimal neighborhood where the family lived in a cluster of apartment buildings seemed somewhat safer than areas along Gaza's border with Israel, which had been devastated in this and past fighting.

Then one night disaster struck. Azzam al-Kawlak's four children had gone to bed, and he and his wife were preparing to join them.

At around 1 a.m. on May 16, a thunderous boom shook his top-floor apartment, followed quickly by a second and third. "The floor cracked below our feet and the furniture was thrown to the wall," the 42-year-old engineer said.

The four-story building collapsed, with Azzam's apartment dropping to the ground. The family escaped through the kitchen balcony, now almost ground level. Bizarrely, the laundry hanging on a clothesline seemed untouched.

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It took a day for the full horror to emerge, as bodies and survivors were pulled from the rubble. The family and neighbors used ropes to clear chunks of concrete, working alongside ill-equipped rescue teams.

By nightfall, the family's death toll stood at 22. Eight bodies were dug out of Azzam's building and 14 from the one next door. The dead included 89-year-old family patriarch Amin, his son Fawaz, 62, his grandson Sameh, 28, and his great-grandson, 6-month-old Qusai.

Just a day earlier, Qusai's parents had celebrated a small milestone, his first tooth. Azzam's two younger brothers were killed. Three nieces — 5-year-old Rula, 10-year-old Yara and 12-year-old Hala — were found in a tight embrace, their bodies the last to be pulled out, said Azzam's surviving older brother, Awni.

The bombing along several hundred meters (yards) of al-Wahda Street took just minutes. In all, it brought down three houses — two in the al-Kawlak compound and one nearby — and killed a total of 43 people, making it the single deadliest air raid of the 11-day war.

Israel said the target was a Hamas tunnel underneath the street, part of what it called a roughly 350-kilometer-long (220-mile) underground network. The tunnels served offensive and defensive purposes, military officials said, accusing Hamas of using civilians as human shields.

Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, a military spokesman, said during a war-time briefing that the military target in Rimal collapsed, causing nearby houses and their supporting structures to collapse as well. "That caused a large amount of civilian casualties, which were not the aim," he said.

He said the army was reviewing the incident and "adjusting the analysis and the ordnance used in the future" to prevent similar events from occurring again. "It's not a totally mathematic exercise in choosing the ordnance," he said.

He said Israel carried out dozens of airstrikes in areas just as densely populated, with far fewer casualties.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz told foreign journalists this week that Israel does everything it can to avoid civilian casualties, but Gaza's crowded urban landscape makes it virtually impossible to avoid them altogether

"Hamas is aiming to hit civilians by purpose and we are trying our best for that not to happen," he said.

The fighting began May 10 after Hamas fired rockets toward Jerusalem in support of Palestinian protests against Israel's heavy-handed policing of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, a site sacred to Jews and Muslims, and the threatened eviction of dozens of Palestinian families by Jewish settlers. In all, Hamas fired more than 4,000 rockets toward Israel during the war, while Israel said it struck hundreds of targets linked to militants in Gaza.

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At Gaza City's main police compound, Capt. Mohammed Meqdad picked through pieces of bomb fragments in a cardboard box labeled "al-Wahda Street."

Two had serial numbers identifying them as fitted with Joint Direct Attack Munition kits manufactured

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by Boeing Co. at its factory in St. Charles, Missouri, to make them so-called "smart bombs," able to be guided to a target by GPS or lasers. Boeing did not answer questions about the bombing, only saying in a statement: "In accordance with U.S. law, the U.S. government authorizes and provides strict oversight for all defense exports."

Meqdad said that based on the fragments, the bombs that brought down the al-Kawlak homes were likely GBU-31s, packed with 430 kilograms (945 pounds) of high explosives. The GBU-31 typically is used for large buildings, but also can destroy underground targets, said N.R. Jenzen-Jones, the director of Armament Research Services, a specialist arms investigations firm.

The bombs carry a powerful blast, meaning surveillance, intelligence-gathering, pre-planning and the correct choice and explosive punch of the weapon should be carefully considered before an attack, he said.

"The intrinsic wide-area effects of large explosive munitions mean they must be used judiciously in the urban environment," he said.

The Israeli military did not respond when asked what bombs were used in the al-Wahda Street strikes.

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Earlier this year, the International Criminal Court began investigating Israel and Hamas for possible war crimes going back to the previous 2014 war. This includes random Hamas rocket fire toward Israeli communities — widely seen as a violation of the rules of war — and some of Israel's deadliest practices, such as the toppling of high-rises that killed entire families in pursuit of militants.

Two Gaza rights groups — al-Mezan and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights — have been documenting Israel's strikes and incursions for years. This time, they again interviewed survivors, including the al-Kawlaks, visited hospitals, took photos and collected death certificates, in preparation for possible new submissions to the ICC.

Samir Zakout of al-Mezan and Mohammed al-Alami of PCHR said they believe the al-Wahda Street bombings — along with other deadly airstrikes — violated the laws of war, arguing the value of any possible military target was dwarfed by significant harm to civilians.

Zakout accused Israel of intentionally using excessive firepower to sow fear, saying it was "one of the direct goals of the war."

The Israeli military does not recognize the ICC, but says its airstrikes are cleared by lawyers to make sure they comply with international standards. During the fighting the military released video of what it said were air force teams calling off strikes because they spotted children in the vicinity. In many cases, it ordered occupants to evacuate buildings before bombing them.

International law professor Paola Gaeta said that "certainly we are witnessing something which is wrong," referring to civilian deaths, but there is a high threshold for proving a war crime. This includes proving disproportionate use of force and intentional targeting of civilians, said Gaeta, who teaches at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

If Israel says it made a reasonable mistake in calculating the amount of explosives in the al-Wahda Street strike, this could serve as a defense, she said.

In all, 254 people were killed in Gaza in this war, including 67 children and 39 women, according to the Gaza health ministry. Hamas has acknowledged the deaths of 80 militants. Eleven civilians, including two children, were killed in Israel, along with one soldier.

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Awni al-Kawlak keeps 22 death certificates in a briefcase, along with the deeds for the two destroyed homes. A third family house was damaged and awaits demolition. The family business, a generator repair shop, was also destroyed. Two apartment buildings, including Awni's home, remain intact.

Sitting in a courtyard behind the rubble, the 49-year-old shrugged when told of Israel's apparent acknowledgement of error. "What will I do with this information?" he said. "I lost my livelihood and I lost my brothers and their children."

The fear that justice will never come makes it harder for the family to deal with loss, he said. He worries that Gaza and its problems, including a suffocating blockade enforced by Israel and Egypt since 2007 to

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contain Hamas, will soon sink back into oblivion.

"We know that the world is now empathetic, but after a while it will forget our problem," he said. "Even when they remember us again, they will remember us as numbers."

## 2 Russian crew do spacewalk at International Space Station

MOSCOW (AP) — Two Russian cosmonauts ventured out of the International Space Station Wednesday on a spacewalk to prepare for the arrival of a new Russian module.

It's the first spacewalk for both Oleg Novitsky and Pyotr Dubrov, who arrived at the space station in April, and it's expected to last about 6 1/2 hours.

The two needed to get the space station ready for the undocking and disposal of the Pirs docking compartment, which will be replaced later this year by the new Nauka (Science) multipurpose laboratory module.

They have already replaced a fluid flow regulator and also need to replace biological and material science samples on the exterior of the Russian modules.

The two Russians currently team up at the space outpost with NASA astronauts Mark Vande Hei, Shane Kimbrough and Megan McArthur; Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Akihiko Hoshide; and European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Pesquet.

## Osaka steps out of French Open and onto sport's third rail

By JIM LITKE AP Sports Writer

Most athletes are comfortable talking about injuries, so long as they can point to a bruise, a bandage, a cast or a spot on an X-ray. Some will even venture an educated guess at how long they might take to heal. Their mental health is a different story.

Or at least it was before Naomi Osaka ended a damaging standoff with top tennis officials by withdrawing from the French Open earlier this week, citing concerns for her well-being. It marked the first time a major star walked away from a major tournament without a visible injury. Judging by the reaction, it appeared Osaka landed on the third rail of sports.

Other athletes, notably Olympian Michael Phelps, spoke candidly about mental-health issues before. Some, like Los Angeles Lakers great Jerry West, detailed their struggles in books only after their playing days were long over. Still others wrestled that tortured secret for a lifetime.

None of them sparked a conversation this wide, in no small part because of what was at stake and a very public back-and-forth that played out on social media. How much more oxygen it draws going forward likely depends on Osaka, already a four-time major champion at age 23; whether more athletes follow her lead; and if so, how fans and the sports establishment react.

"When someone tears an ACL, it's 6-8 months, we know the time frame. And like with everything else in life, we want a finite number. But that's not how mental health works," said Dr. Wendy Borlabi, a Chicago-based performance psychologist who works with pro, Olympic and college athletes.

"People are different, we experience things differently, but we all want the process to say, 'This is what you do to get better.' ... It's not that simple. There's no 'one-size-fits-all,'" she continued. "But the more we talk about mental health in the open, the more we put the stigmatism behind us, especially in sports. This is a big opportunity."

There's a long list of athletes who could have benefitted from the chance. Some may still.

In recent years, NBA players Kevin Love and DeMar DeRozan and the WNBA's A'ja Wilson have spoken very publicly about their bouts with depression, sharing both the successes and setbacks. Baseball fans of a certain age remember the late Jimmy Piersall, portrayed in the movie "Fear Strikes Out," and whose 17-year major league career was littered with well-publicized fistfights, scrapes and stunts — all while he was battling bipolar disorder.

Piersall parlayed his relative fame into a second career in broadcasting and scouting, suggesting that some of the stunts he pulled were just that — stunts — to fulfill the public's perception of him.



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"Probably the best thing that ever happened to me was going nuts," he wrote in his autobiography. "Who ever heard of Jimmy Piersall until that happened?"

Mental-health specialists who work in sports remind the rest of us that the visibility afforded athletes is both a blessing and a curse. There's precious little privacy, and every doctor's note seeking time off scrutinized like a tax return. Imagine having a bad day at work and then sitting down in front of a dozen microphones to explain in detail how and why it happened, over and over.

That's why those same specialists note that by the time an athlete is acting out, the injury has already occurred.

"That's the challenge with mental health in sports," said Dr. Ross Flowers, a San Diego based sports psychologist whose client list also includes Olympians and several pro and college teams.

"Athletes get attention precisely because they're above average, and sometimes it's easy to forget they're humans first. They're supposed to be dominant and not show vulnerability, yet in most cases we don't learn they're struggling until it shows up in their behavior," he added.

"That's why what Naomi did was brave. She was proactive. She recognized something was holding her back and said, "I want to be at my best and I can't be that at the moment.""

Whether Osaka's example and a growing public awareness about mental health issues encourage athletes facing similar problems to more forcefully speak out, the people running sports would do well to prepare. While most of Osaka's contemporaries defended the requirement that players engage with the media to help grow the game, no more than a handful actually enjoy the give-and-take dynamic.

And right on time came further proof that media obligations can be damaging to a player's health. No. 11 seed Petra Kvitova, herself a two-time major champion, announced she, too, had withdrawn from the tournament after falling and twisting her ankle on the way back from — what else? — "my post-match press requirements."

## Eye exams seek to improve outlook for rural Romanian kids

By STEPHEN McGRATH AND ANDREEA ALEXANDRU Associated Press

NUCSOARA (AP) — Sometimes, one simple test can change a life.

Dozens of Romanian children had their eyes examined for the first time in a remote area of the southern Carpathian Mountains.

The humanitarian organization Casa Buna, or Good House, arranged the eye tests in Nucsoara, which comprises several villages. Routine eye exams are recommended from early infancy, but many children in the impoverished rural community had never been screened by an ophthalmologist.

"Given that out of 30 children tested, 20 needed glasses, I think such ophthalmic caravans are needed in as many villages in the country as possible," Mioara Marinescu, the volunteer ophthalmologist at Saturday's event, told The Associated Press.

The importance of testing children's eyes is not limited to needing corrective lenses. Amblyopia, the condition known as "lazy eye," is estimated to affect 1% to 5% of children worldwide, and missed cases can lead to long-term problems.

While examining children, Marinescu found three with amblyopia, a disorder she says can "limit access to certain professions in adulthood."

"Unfortunately in our country, children do not receive education or health equally," the eye doctor said.

Valeriu Nicolae, who founded Casa Buna in 2007, comes from a poor Roma community himself. Poor eyesight can have a serious, negative impact on children's educational outcomes, he said.

"Teachers think the kids hate to read, but in fact, they hate to read because they cannot read because their eyesight is poor," Nicolae said. "Kids who cannot read because their eyes are really bad are useless in the educational process. They get fed up and they drop out."

The volunteer organization supports more than 300 children and their families, putting a strong emphasis on encouraging the children to pursue education. The group has played a prominent role in supporting children throughout the pandemic.

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Casa Buna arrived in Nucsoara, 200 kilometers (120 miles) northwest of the capital Bucharest, more than a year ago. Volunteers visit every two weeks, bringing aid to 94 children and their families.

"It was the start of the pandemic, and practically none of these kids had internet or computers. We put computers in all of their houses, made sure they have internet ... and all they need to stay online to continue their education," Nicolae said.

Dozens of volunteers participated in the eye-screening event, including motorcyclists from the group Bikers for Humanity. The volunteers organized activities and games to entice as many children as possible. Casa Buna also brought youngsters gifts for International Children's Day, held on June 1.

"We'll do (eye testing) this year in nine villages. We hope to make anywhere between 600 to 1,000 pairs of glasses," said Nicolae, whose tireless campaigning for better children's education has won him international awards.

Romania, which has a population of more than 19 million, has the highest percentage of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the entire 27-nation European Union — 35.8% compared to an EU-wide average of 22.5%, according to statistics agency Eurostat.

Child poverty is most prevalent in the country's rural communities, where one in two children lives in poverty.

"From birth, we should all have equal opportunities in education and access to health care," ophthalmologist Marinescu said. "Regardless of the geographical area in which we are born."

## Newer methods may boost gene therapy's use for more diseases

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

Jordan Janz knew his gamble on an experimental gene therapy for his rare disease might be paying off when he returned to work and a friend sniffed him.

"He said, 'you have a normal smell, you smell good,'" Janz recalled. "And I'm like, 'that's probably the nicest thing you've ever said.'"

The 22-year-old Canadian man's previous treatment required 40 to 60 pills a day and left him smelling like rotten eggs or stinky cheese. He was born with a flawed gene that left him unable to make a protein needed by virtually every organ in the body. Kids with this disease can throw up a dozen times a day, need eye drops every hour to prevent blindness and often kidney transplants before they're adults.

Now, Janz and a growing number of others with rare diseases have hope of not just better treatments, but perhaps a cure. Gene therapy increasingly is being used to attack the root cause of their problems by supplying the DNA they lack.

Janz was the first person in one such study at the University of California, San Diego. He and two other participants no longer need the eye drops and pills that only delayed progression of their disease and left them smelling bad. The company that developed their therapy is testing it for several other diseases by simply adjusting what gene is supplied.

Other companies are doing the same, and U.S. health officials are working on guidance to encourage the trend.

"I am very excited for the field because I feel like we're beginning to get to a critical mass," where a single method or product can be deemed safe and then adapted for many uses, said Dr. Peter Marks, head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration center that oversees gene therapies. "You're essentially using the same rocket ship to put stuff into space dozens of times."

### NOT SO RARE DISEASES

In the United States, a disease is considered rare if it affects fewer than 200,000 people, said Ron Bartek, a board member of the National Organization for Rare Disorders and whose son, Keith, died of one -- Friedreich ataxia, a progressive neurological condition.

There are more than 7,000 rare diseases and collectively, they're not so rare -- about 30 million Americans have one.

Seven gene therapies are approved in the United States and a few more are sold in Europe or elsewhere.



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In 2017, when the first ones were OK'd in the U.S., 854 companies were developing them. That grew to 1,085 by the end of last year, according to the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine, an advocacy group for the field. More than 400 gene therapy trials are underway now.

"It's really been an exciting couple of years," Bartek said. "We're finally looking at the possibility of profoundly beneficial therapies" for many diseases.

There's interest from not only small biotech firms but also universities and big companies such as Pfizer and Novartis, he said.

## DOCTORING DNA

Gene therapies often aim to supply a gene people lack. The trick is getting the new one where it needs to be without triggering other problems.

Some therapies, such as ones for inherited forms of blindness, inject the treatment into the eye. A common method for others is to remove some of a patient's blood cells, alter them in the lab to carry the desired gene, and return them through an IV.

What has scientists excited is better vectors -- disabled viruses that ferry the gene into cells -- that seem safer and more effective.

One, surprisingly, may be HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Doctors recently reported that a gene therapy using modified HIV from London-based Orchard Therapeutics gave a working immune system to 48 babies and toddlers who were born without one. Avrobio, a Massachusetts company, also is using HIV in gene therapies it is testing for cystinosis, Janz's disease, and several others.

BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. in California is taking a similar approach with a different virus called AAV for hemophilia, a blood clotting disorder, and several other diseases.

"The only thing that's changing is the payload, the gene," said Avrobio's chief scientific officer, Dr. Chris Mason.

## THE SNIFF TEST

Janz lives in Consort, a Canadian village of 700 in Alberta. His mother called the first day of enrollment for Avrobio's study under Stephanie Cherqui, a pediatrics expert at UCSD.

People with cystinosis are unable to clear cystine, a chemical that builds up in their cells and forms crystals that damage kidneys, eyes and other organs, and leads to muscle weakness, trouble swallowing and even breathing. The vomiting is so bad that many kids need a feeding tube placed in their stomach, and wind up being home-schooled because they're teased by classmates and their medical needs are so complex, Cherqui said.

"When you meet these families, these children are suffering every day from the disease," she said. "I can't even imagine. It's terrible."

Gene therapy offers hope of a one-time fix. The therapy doesn't have to get into all cells to work, just enough of them to make sufficient amounts of the protein that removes cystine so it doesn't build up.

Janz was treated in 2019 and said he feels "essentially cured," though it will take longer to know if he really is, and he may need a kidney transplant someday because of damage done by his disease. Tests show that crystals in his eyes, skin and muscle have greatly decreased. Instead of 54 pills a day, he just takes vitamins and specific nutrients his body needs.

"I have more of a life now," Janz said. "I'm going to school. I'm hoping to open up my own business one day" -- a deli featuring charcuterie, prepared meats such as hams and sausages. It's an interest he developed during years of frequent trips to Chicago as a young boy to try other treatments. He stayed so often at the Omni Hotel that the chef let him cook in the hotel's fancy restaurant when he was 13. The staff even bought Janz a knife kit and his own chef's hat, apron and shoes.

## CHALLENGES REMAIN

Gene therapy doesn't work for everyone, it's unknown how long any benefits will last, and safety remains a concern. In the past, a couple gene therapies that used different vectors triggered cancer in a few patients who received them.

"Every time we think we have overcome the safety issues, we continue to butt up against them," the FDA's

Marks said. "I have confidence that we will work through them ... but we can't get too sure of ourselves."

Marks and many other scientists think gene editing eventually may offer a long-lasting way to do gene therapy. Instead of just supplying a missing gene to cells, editing permanently alters a patient's native DNA to insert a gene or knock out one that's causing trouble.

Brian Madeux, a Phoenix-area man who is now 48, became the first person in the world to have gene editing tried inside his body in 2017 for a metabolic disorder called Hunter syndrome. Through an IV, he received billions of copies of a corrective gene and a genetic tool to put it in a precise spot.

But the therapy wasn't potent enough to allow him or eight other patients to stop weekly IV treatments to supply the enzyme their bodies are unable to make.

Even though it didn't give the hoped-for result, "I think the doctors have learned a lot from me," Madeux said recently. "I felt that I could help other people" by furthering science.

"I took a shot, a chance that something could cure my disease," he said. "I'm very happy that I did it."

## Motive unclear as firefighter kills colleague at station

By STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

SANTA CLARITA, Calif. (AP) — A firefighter killed a co-worker and wounded another at their small fire station before setting his own home ablaze and apparently killing himself in California's second deadly workplace shooting in days.

The gunman, a firefighter specialist and engineer, was off-duty when he apparently drove the 10 miles (16 kilometers) from his home in Acton, north of Los Angeles, and opened fire Tuesday morning at Los Angeles County Fire Station 81, authorities said.

The killer "was not scheduled to work today. He came back and confronted the on-duty personnel," a visibly shaken Fire Chief Daryl Osby told reporters. "I cannot speak to the mindset of the shooter."

The chief also said he didn't know about any disciplinary actions involving the gunman, who wasn't immediately identified.

A 44-year-old fire specialist, who drove a fire truck, was shot several times in the upper torso and died. The father of three daughters had been with the department for more than 20 years, Osby said.

A 54-year-old fire captain who also was shot in the upper body underwent surgery and was in critical but stable condition at a hospital.

The gunman then returned to his house, which authorities found engulfed in flames. He was later found dead in an empty pool of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot, since nobody else was at the home and deputies didn't open fire, sheriff's officials said.

Helicopters fought the blaze because it was considered unsafe to send firefighters into the home, which burned for hours. A SWAT team and a bomb squad were sent in before firefighters were finally allowed to use hoses on the gutted ruins.

The fire station is in Agua Dulce, a rural community of about 3,000 people in the desert of northern Los Angeles County known for its rock formations and panoramic views.

Osby said the station has only four firefighters per shift and was considered a home by workers who typically work there 24 hours at a time.

"As a fire chief, I never thought that when our firefighters face danger, that they would face danger in one of our community fire stations," Osby said.

County Supervisor Janice Hahn said firefighters risk their lives daily.

"Between emergency calls, the fire station must have felt like their safe haven," she said. "Unfortunately that sense of safety has now been shattered."

The shooting occurred less than a week after a longtime worker opened fire with three handguns at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority bus and rail yard in San Jose, killing nine people and then himself as law enforcement officers closed in. He had rigged his home to burn down before heading to his workplace.

Acquaintances said 57-year-old Samuel Cassidy had a short fuse at times and a longtime grudge against

his work but the exact motive for the shooting remained under investigation. Body camera footage from a Santa Clara County sheriff's deputy who went into a building as shots were being fired was released Tuesday.

A new FBI report finds that California had the most mass shooting incidents in the last 20 years, a figure that aligns with its status as the nation's most populous state, with nearly 40 million residents.

## Police release dramatic body-cam video of rail yard shooting

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — A gunman who killed nine co-workers at a Northern California rail yard shot himself twice in the head as sheriff's deputies raced into a building, according to authorities who on Tuesday released body-camera footage of the tense encounter.

The nearly 4 1/2 minutes of footage is from one deputy who arrived minutes after the first shooting reports and while shots were still being fired at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority bus and rail yard in San Jose, where 57-year-old Samuel Cassidy opened fire before killing himself.

A "contact team" of deputies and San Jose police officers was immediately formed to find the gunman, who was reported to be inside a building and armed with a handgun. The body camera footage shows the team cautiously climbing stairs to the third floor, where a VTA supervisor comes out with arms raised and hands over his keycard so officers can get inside the building.

The five-member team then sweeps into the building, guns raised, using gun-mounted flashlights as they pass through rooms and corridors to a dispatch center.

Within minutes, they hear a gunshot, then another, followed by two more. As they come to another door, one of the team looks through a small window and says: "I've got somebody down" inside. The team opens the door and somebody shouts "Let me see your hands!"

What might be two more shots are heard.

The footage shows a man slumped in a chair near a stairwell with a gun in his hand. He is across from a dispatch center door with a window shattered by gunfire.

The gunman had shot himself under the chin then put the gun to the side of his head, the sheriff said.

It wasn't clear whether Cassidy knew that law enforcement officers were closing in on him or not, but he may have seen their flashlights and heard them yelling to each other as they determined where the shooter and victims were as they moved through the building, Smith said.

Smith said her office used an active shooter protocol advocated by a lieutenant who had been in Colorado during the 1999 Columbine school mass shooting there. Smith said law enforcement had been training together.

The deputies and officers "hardly spoke a word to each other" when they entered the building because "they knew what their job was," she said, adding that they showed extraordinary courage.

"There were over 100 VTA employees on site that morning, and I believe the bravery of all of law enforcement personnel really prevented the loss of additional life," she said.

A VTA spokeswoman told the Mercury News in San Jose that it may take weeks or months to resume service on the commuter rail line. The Guadalupe Yard operates as the nerve center of the light rail network and is now a crime scene under sheriff's department control. Spokeswoman Stacey Hendler Ross said the agency is focused on supporting traumatized workers who lost colleagues.

The footage was released as a new FBI report finds that California had the most mass shooting incidents in the last 20 years, a figure that aligns with its population, the report found. It also came as an off-duty Los Angeles County firefighter fatally shot and killed one colleague and injured another before taking his own life.

The sheriff said investigators were still trying to determine the motive for the shootings, although acquaintances and his ex-wife said Cassidy had talked about hating his job at least a decade ago and had an angry and unpredictable streak.

"We're beginning to piece things together. But we've talked with hundreds of witnesses," Smith said.

## Pelosi rules out having Biden create Jan. 6 commission

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is ruling out a presidential commission to study the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, telling House Democrats that having President Joe Biden appoint a panel is unworkable even after the Senate blocked an independent probe last week.

Pelosi on Tuesday laid out possible next steps after last week's Senate vote, in which Senate Republicans blocked legislation to create an independent, bipartisan panel to investigate the siege by former President Donald Trump's supporters. She proposed four options for an investigation of the attack, according to a person on the private Democratic caucus call who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal conversations.

The first option, Pelosi said, is to give the Senate another chance to vote on the commission. Six Republicans voted with Democrats to move forward with the bill, and a seventh missed the vote but said he would have backed it. That means Democrats would only need support from three additional Republicans to reach the 60 votes needed for passage. The commission would be modeled after a highly respected panel that investigated the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The other options involve the House investigating the attack, meaning the probes would be inherently partisan. Pelosi suggested that she could appoint a new select committee to investigate the siege or give the responsibility to a single committee, like the House Homeland Security panel, which wrote the original bipartisan bill to create the commission. Alternately, Pelosi said committees could simply push ahead with their own investigations that are already underway.

But the speaker said she believed a commission appointed by Biden — an idea pitched by some in her caucus after Friday's Senate vote — was "not a workable idea in this circumstance" because Congress would still need to approve money and subpoena authority for the panel.

Pelosi's comments come as members of both parties have pushed for a deep dive into the insurrection, which was designed to interrupt the presidential electoral count and was the worst attack on Congress in two centuries. Four rioters died in the attack, including a woman who was shot by police as she tried to break into the House chamber while lawmakers were still inside. The rioters brutally beat police and broke in through windows and doors as they hunted for lawmakers and called for Trump's defeat to be overturned.

The White House has not yet said whether Biden would try to appoint a commission without Congress. On Friday, White House deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters that "the president has been clear that the shameful events of Jan. 6 need to be independently and fully investigated" and that he remains committed to that.

"We will continue to work with Congress to find a path forward to ensure that happens," she said.

After the Senate vote, some Democrats urged Biden to move on his own.

"In light of the GOP's cowardly filibuster of a bipartisan January 6th commission, I urge President Biden to form and appoint a Presidential Commission to fully investigate the insurrection at the United States Capitol, to identify the individuals and organizations who plotted or were involved in those violent acts, and to make recommendations to prevent such an attack from ever recurring," said Virginia Rep. Gerry Connolly in a statement over the weekend.

It's uncertain whether the Senate would hold another vote on the commission and whether any additional Republicans would support it. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., left open the possibility of a second attempt, saying after the vote that "the events of Jan. 6 will be investigated."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., opposes the commission, saying he believes the panel would be partisan even though it would be divided evenly between the two parties. McConnell's criticism came after Trump opposed it and called the legislation a "Democrat trap."

Still, six in McConnell's caucus defied him, arguing that an independent look was needed, and Pennsylvania's Pat Toomey would have brought the total to seven but for a family commitment, his office said. The Republicans who voted to move forward on the bill were Sens. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Susan Collins of Maine, Ben Sasse of Nebraska, Rob Portman of Ohio and Mitt Romney of Utah.



The House passed the bill in May, with 35 Republicans voting with Democrats to pass it.

## Firefighter kills colleague, wounds another at fire station

By STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

SANTA CLARITA, Calif. (AP) — An off-duty Los Angeles County firefighter fatally shot a fellow firefighter and wounded another at their small community fire station Tuesday before going to his nearby home, setting it on fire and apparently killing himself, authorities said.

A 44-year-old fire specialist died and a 54-year-old firefighter was shot when the gunman opened fire shortly before 11 a.m. at Fire Station 81, which is about 45 miles (72 kilometers) north of Los Angeles, Fire Chief Daryl Osby told reporters. The wounded man was in critical but stable condition at a hospital.

The shooter was a firefighter specialist and engineer, authorities said. The fire chief said he could not speak to the motive for the attack and doesn't know about any disciplinary actions.

"He was not scheduled to work today. He came back and confronted the on-duty personnel," a visibly shaken Osby said. "I cannot speak to the mindset of the shooter. I can say that it's very tragic and sad that that would be a decision point of one of the members of the Los Angeles County Fire Department."

The gunman, who was not identified, then went to his house less than 10 miles (16 kilometers) away, which authorities found engulfed in flames. He was later found dead in an empty pool.

The shooter appeared to have a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva said.

All the firefighters worked at the small station in Agua Dulce, a rural community of about 3,000 people in the desert of northern Los Angeles County known for its rock formations and panoramic views.

The shooting comes less than a week after a gunman killed nine of his co-workers at a rail yard in San Jose after rigging his home to burn down. He killed himself Wednesday after expressing hatred for his workplace for years.

The man who died in Tuesday's shooting at the fire station was a more than 20-year veteran who had been promoted to firefighter specialist, the person who drives the firetruck, officials said. He was shot multiple times in the upper torso, according to authorities.

The fire chief says family and co-workers described the victim, who was not identified, as "truly dedicated, one of our better firefighters and a true loss to our department."

"As fire chief, I never thought when our firefighters face danger, they would face that danger at one of our community fire stations," Osby said.

Neighbors watched black smoke pouring from the burned house in the nearby community of Acton, a dry, hilly area dotted with ranches with horses and other livestock. The fire burned for hours, gutting the home, with helicopters making multiple water drops to douse it.

Michael May, 70, lives down the road and said he was sitting in his living room when he heard the buzz of helicopters flying low.

"Around here, that usually means a fire," he said.

He saw a swarm of police cars racing up the street, and deputies emerged wearing bulletproof vests.

May has been a resident of the community for 23 years but didn't know who lived at the gutted home. He said many people in law enforcement live in the area, as well as some in the film industry.

"It's a place people want to go for peace and quiet," he said.

Brian Dalrymple, 79, lives across the street from May and said he thought the burned home had been sold recently.

He and his wife went outside to see the thick smoke, initially concerned the flames might spread to their home. Dalrymple said he never heard gunshots but saw deputies rushing up to the property, long guns in hand.

He said a friend called to tell them the news.

"We didn't know what she was talking about," Dalrymple said. "It's usually pretty peaceful out here."



## Texas GOP to revive voting bill, Democrats plot next move

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas Republicans pressed ahead with their push for tougher election laws Tuesday, vowing to ensure Democrats' weekend victory over one of the most restrictive voting measures in the country would only be temporary.

GOP Gov. Greg Abbott prepared to call lawmakers back for a special session to revive the voting measure that died when Democrats staged a dramatic walkout from the state Capitol just before the end of the legislative session Sunday night. Bolstered by GOP majorities in both the House and Senate, Abbott also was weighing whether to use the extra session to take up other top conservative priorities that had failed during the session.

That left Texas Democrats facing the aftermath of their last-minute maneuver and confronting how — or even whether — they can turn it into more than just a temporary roadblock in the GOP's nationwide pursuit to impose tighter voting laws across the U.S.

"There are consequences," said state Sen. John Whitmire, one of Texas' longest-serving Democrats.

Democrats who pulled off the revolt in the state House of Representatives just before a midnight deadline Sunday did not leave indefinitely. Most were back on the House floor just 12 hours later for ceremonial business, and none are calling to boycott a special session.

They are instead betting their dramatic flight out of the Texas Capitol and to a Black church will make Republicans think twice about some provisions in the legislation — like banning early voting Sunday morning, when many Black worshippers go to the polls after services — and give them more say on the next elections bill.

But bare-knuckled Republican governing is a way of life in the Texas Capitol and no concessions are so far promised. Abbott, meanwhile, has begun both punishing and taunting Democrats while he settles on deciding on when he will order them back to work.

He said Monday he would veto the part of the budget that funds legislators' salaries, a move that could impact not just Democrats but also other Capitol staff. He then tweeted a reminder of the last time Texas Democrats dramatically blocked a bill: when then-state Sen. Wendy Davis talked for more than 11 consecutive hours in 2013 to filibuster a sweeping anti-abortion measure, which Republicans immediately revived and passed in a special session.

"We all know how that story ended," Abbott tweeted.

Texas Republicans may also enter a 30-day special session with not just commanding majorities, but new leverage. Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the staunchly conservative leader of the Senate, also wants Abbott to demand that lawmakers try again to pass a ban on transgender athletes in girls' and women's sports.

The Texas GOP's torpedoed bill, known as Senate Bill 7, would have reduced polling hours, empowered poll watchers and scaled back ways to vote. It included a ban on drive-thru voting centers and 24-hour polling places, both of which were used last year around Houston, reflecting how Republicans went after Texas' largest Democratic stronghold.

But it was new provisions added during final negotiations between the House and the Senate that triggered the Democrats' dramatic action. One of the new measures would have made it easier to overturn an election by allowing a judge to void a candidate's victory if the number of fraudulent votes cast could change the outcome, regardless of whether it was proved that the fraud actually had affected the result. It was the kind of provision that could allow a favorable judge to side with a candidate who makes broad claims of fraud with little specific evidence — as former President Donald Trump did with virtually no success.

Some Democrats suggested they would allow a vote on the elections legislation, if it more closely resembled the earlier version and included some bipartisan input. Democrats had voted against that as well, but had not staged the protest.

"If we get back on track with that mentality, we might be able to come up with election policy that is less objectionable," Democratic state Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer said.

There were some signs Republicans might back off some of the new, strict measures. Republican state Rep. Travis Clardy, one of the negotiators on the final version of the Texas bill, told NPR on Tuesday that

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banning early Sunday morning voting was essentially a typo -- that instead of starting voting no earlier than 1 p.m., the bill was supposed to say 11 a.m.

"That's one of the things I look forward to with fixing the most. Call it a scrivener's error, whatever you want to," Clardy told NPR.

But the Senate author of the bill, Republican Bryan Hughes, made no mention of such a mistake over the weekend while defending the new Sunday limits. "Election workers want to go to church, too," Hughes said.

It the new bill is not acceptable to Democrats — and they were to walk out again — Republicans don't have to stand pat. State troopers could be mobilized to try to forcibly bring lawmakers back to the House, as was the case in 2003, when Texas Democrats fled to Oklahoma and New Mexico to try and block new voting maps.

Whitmire, who was first elected to the Texas Legislature in 1973, spent 36 days holed up in a hotel before breaking ranks with his fellow Democrats and returning home. The decision gave Senate Republicans at the time the quorum needed to get back to work on a redistricting plan that would give the GOP more seats in Congress.

"Of upmost important is, what are you going to do when you get back?" Whitmire said of denying a quorum. "Are things going to be different? Probably not. But it educates the public and lets your core group know how committed you are to principles."

Texas Democrats' move has reverberated across the country. President Joe Biden on Tuesday urged Democrats and their allies to step up the fight over voting law, which is expected to heat up on Washington later this month when Democrats debate a massive federal rewrite of elections law.

"I urge voting rights groups in this country to begin to redouble their efforts now to register and educate voters. June should be a month of action on Capitol Hill," he said.

## Biden decries 'horrific' Tulsa massacre in emotional speech

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — An emotional President Joe Biden marked the 100th anniversary of the massacre that destroyed a thriving Black community in Tulsa, declaring Tuesday that he had "come to fill the silence" about one of the nation's darkest — and long suppressed — moments of racial violence.

"Some injustices are so heinous, so horrific, so grievous, they cannot be buried, no matter how hard people try," Biden said. "Only with truth can come healing."

Biden's commemoration of the deaths of hundreds of Black people killed by a white mob a century ago came amid the current national reckoning on racial justice.

"Just because history is silent, it does not mean that it did not take place," Biden said. He said "hell was unleashed, literal hell was unleashed." And now, he said, the nation must come to grips with the subsequent sin of denial.

"We can't just choose what we want to know, and not what we should know," said Biden. "I come here to help fill the silence, because in silence wounds deepen."

After Biden left, some audience members spontaneously sang a famous civil rights march song, "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around."

The events Tuesday stood in stark contrast to then-President Donald Trump's trip to Tulsa last June, which was greeted by protests. Or the former president's decision, one year ago, to clear Lafayette Square near the White House of demonstrators who gathered to protest the death of George Floyd, a Black man, under the knee of a white Minneapolis police officer.

In 1921 — on May 31 and June 1 — a white mob, including some people hastily deputized by authorities, looted and burned Tulsa's Greenwood district, which was referred to as Black Wall Street.

As many as 300 Black Tulsans were killed, and thousands of survivors were forced for a time into internment camps overseen by the National Guard. Burned bricks and a fragment of a church basement are about all that survive today of the more than 30-block historically Black district.

On Tuesday, the president, joined by top Black advisers, met privately with three surviving members of the Greenwood community who lived through the violence, the White House said. Viola "Mother" Fletcher,

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Hughes "Uncle Red" Van Ellis and Lessie "Mother Randle" Benningfield Randle are all between the ages of 101 and 107.

Biden said their experience had been "a story seen in the mirror dimly."

"But no longer," the president told the survivors. "Now your story will be known in full view."

Outside, Latasha Sanders, 33, of Tulsa, brought her five children and a nephew in hopes of spotting Biden. "It's been 100 years, and this is the first we've heard from any U.S. president," she said. "I brought my kids here today just so they could be a part of history and not just hear about it, and so they can teach generations to come."

John Ondiek, another Tulsan in the crowd following Biden's speech on cellphones, said he was encouraged that "There aren't just Black people here. That tells me there's an awakening going on in this country."

Several hundred people milled around Greenwood Avenue in front of the historic Vernon African Methodist Episcopal Church awaiting Biden's arrival at the nearby Greenwood Cultural Center. Some vendors were selling memorabilia, including Black Lives Matter hats, shirts and flags under a bridge of the interstate that cuts through the district.

The names and pictures of Black men killed by police, including Eric Harris and Terrence Crutcher in Tulsa, hung on a chain-link fence next to the church.

Biden briefly toured an exhibit at the center, at times stepping closer to peer at framed historic photographs, before he was escorted into a private meeting with the three survivors.

America's continuing struggle over race will continue to test Biden, whose presidency would have been impossible without overwhelming support from Black voters, both in the Democratic primaries and the general election.

He announced Tuesday that he was appointing Vice President Kamala Harris to lead efforts on voting rights as the GOP carries out efforts to pass laws restricting access to the ballot. Republicans portray such legislation as aimed at preventing fraudulent voting, but many critics believe it is designed to limit the voting of minorities.

Biden has pledged to help combat racism in policing and other areas following nationwide protests after Floyd's death a year ago that reignited a national conversation about race.

Biden called on Congress to act swiftly to address policing reform. But he has also long projected himself as an ally of police, who are struggling with criticism about long-used tactics and training methods and difficulties in recruitment.

The Tulsa massacre has only recently entered the national discourse — and the presidential visit put an even brighter spotlight on the event.

Biden, who was joined by Housing Secretary Marcia Fudge and senior advisers Susan Rice and Cedric Richmond, also announced new measures he said could help narrow the wealth gap between races and reinvest in underserved communities by expanding access to homeownership and small-business ownership.

The White House said the administration will take steps to address disparities that result in Black-owned homes being appraised at tens of thousands of dollars less than comparable homes owned by white residents as well as issue new federal rules to fight housing discrimination. The administration is also setting a goal of increasing the share of federal contracts awarded to small disadvantaged businesses by 50% by 2026, funneling an estimated additional \$100 billion to such businesses over the five-year period, according to the White House.

Historians say the massacre in Tulsa began after a local newspaper drummed up a furor over a Black man accused of stepping on a white girl's foot. When Black Tulsans showed up with guns to prevent the man's lynching, white residents responded with overwhelming force.

Reparations for Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved and for other racial discrimination have been debated in the U.S. since slavery ended in 1865. Now they are being discussed by colleges and universities with ties to slavery and by local governments looking to make cash payments to Black residents.

Biden, who was vice president to the nation's first Black president and who chose a Black woman as his own vice president, backs a study of reparations, both in Tulsa and more broadly, but has not committed

to supporting payments.

Trump visited Tulsa last year under vastly different circumstances.

After suspending his campaign rallies because of the coronavirus pandemic, Trump, a Republican, chose Tulsa as the place to mark his return. But his decision to schedule the rally on June 19, the holiday known as Juneteenth that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, was met with such fierce criticism that he postponed the event by a day. The rally was still marked by protests outside and empty seats inside an arena downtown.

## Meat producer JBS says expects most plants working Wednesday

By ROD McGUIRK and DEE-ANN DURBIN Associated Press Writers

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — A ransomware attack on the world's largest meat processing company disrupted production around the world just weeks after a similar incident shut down a U.S. oil pipeline.

Brazil's JBS SA, however, said late Tuesday that it had made "significant progress" in dealing with the cyberattack and expects the "vast majority" of its plants to be operating on Wednesday.

"Our systems are coming back online and we are not sparing any resources to fight this threat," Andre Nogueira, CEO of JBS USA, said in a statement.

Earlier, the White House said JBS had notified the U.S. of a ransom demand from a criminal organization likely based in Russia. White House principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the White House and the Department of Agriculture have been in touch with the company several times this week.

JBS is the second-largest producer of beef, pork and chicken in the U.S. If it were to shut down for even one day, the U.S. would lose almost a quarter of its beef-processing capacity, or the equivalent of 20,000 beef cows, according to Trey Malone, an assistant professor of agriculture at Michigan State University.

The closures reflect the reality that modern meat processing plants are heavily automated, for both food- and worker-safety reasons. Computers collect data at multiple stages of the production process, and orders, billing, shipping and other functions are all electronic.

JBS, which has not stated publicly that the attack was ransomware, said the cyberattack affected servers supporting its operations in North America and Australia. Backup servers weren't affected and it said it was not aware of any customer, supplier or employee data being compromised.

Malone said the disruption could further raise meat prices ahead of summer barbecues. Even before the attack, U.S. meat prices were rising due to coronavirus shutdowns, bad weather and high plant absenteeism. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has said it expects beef prices to climb 1% to 2% this year, poultry as much as 1.5% and pork between by from 2% and 3%.

JBS, which is a majority shareholder of Pilgrim's Pride, didn't say which of its 84 U.S. facilities were closed Monday and Tuesday because of the attack. It said JBS USA and Pilgrim's were able to ship meat from nearly all of its facilities Tuesday. The company also said it was making progress toward resuming plant operations in the U.S. and Australia. Several of the company's pork, poultry and prepared foods plants were operational Tuesday and its Canada beef facility resumed production, it said.

Earlier Tuesday, a union official confirmed that two shifts at the company's largest U.S. beef plant, in Greeley, Colorado, were canceled. Some plant shifts in Canada were also canceled Monday and Tuesday, according to JBS Facebook posts.

In Australia, thousands of meat plant workers had no work for a second day Tuesday, and a government minister said it might be days before production resumes. JBS is Australia's largest meat and food processing company, with 47 facilities across the country including slaughterhouses, feedlots and meat processing sites.

Jean-Pierre said the White House "is engaging directly with the Russian government on this matter and delivering the message that responsible states do not harbor ransomware criminals." The FBI is investigating the incident, and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is offering technical support to JBS.

In addition, USDA has spoken to several major meat processors in the U.S. to alert them to the situation, and the White House is assessing any potential impact on the nation's meat supply.



JBS has more than 150,000 employees worldwide.

It's not the first time a ransomware attack has targeted a food company. Last November, Milan-based Campari Group said it was the victim of a ransomware attack that caused a temporary technology outage and compromised some business and personal data.

In March, Molson Coors announced a cyber attack that affected its production and shipping. Molson Coors said it was able to get some of its breweries running after 24 hours; others took several days.

Ransomware expert Brett Callow, a threat analyst at the security firm Emsisoft, said companies like JBS make ideal targets.

"They play a critical role in the food supply chain and threat actors likely believe this increases their chances of getting a speedy payout," Callow said.

Mark Jordan, who follows the meat industry as the executive director of Leap Market Analytics, said the disruption could be minimal assuming JBS recovers in the next few days. Meat processors are used to dealing with delays because of a host of factors, including industrial accidents and power outages, and they make up lost production with extra shifts, he said.

"Several plants owned by a major meatpacker going offline for a couple of days is a major headache, but it is manageable assuming it doesn't extend much beyond that," he said.

Jordan said it will help that U.S. meat demand generally eases for a few weeks between Memorial Day and the July 4 Independence Day holiday.

But the attacks can wreak havoc. Last month, a gang of hackers shut down operation of the Colonial Pipeline, the largest U.S. fuel pipeline, for nearly a week. The closure sparked long lines and panic buying at gas stations across the Southeast. Colonial Pipeline confirmed it paid \$4.4 million to the hackers.

Jason Crabtree, the co-founder of QOMPLX, a Virginia-based artificial intelligence and machine learning company, said Marriott, FedEx and others have also been targeted by ransomware attacks. He said companies need to do a better job of rapidly detecting bad actors in their systems.

"A lot of organizations aren't able to find and fix different vulnerabilities faster than the adversaries that they're fighting," Crabtree said.

Crabtree said the government also plays a critical role, and said President Joe Biden's recent executive order on cybersecurity — which requires all federal agencies to use basic security measures, like multi-factor authentication — is a good start.

## **Pelosi rules out having Biden create Jan. 6 commission**

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is ruling out a presidential commission to study the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol, telling House Democrats on Tuesday that having President Joe Biden appoint a panel is unworkable even after the Senate blocked an independent probe last week.

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But the speaker said she believed a commission appointed by Biden — an idea pitched by some in her caucus after Friday's Senate vote — was "not a workable idea in this circumstance" because Congress would still need to approve money and subpoena authority for the panel.

Pelosi's comments come as members of both parties have pushed for a deep dive into the insurrection, which was designed to interrupt the presidential electoral count and was the worst attack on Congress in two centuries. Four rioters died in the attack, including a woman who was shot by police as she tried to break into the House chamber while lawmakers were still inside. The rioters brutally beat police and broke in through windows and doors as they hunted for lawmakers and called for Trump's defeat to be overturned.

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After the Senate vote, some Democrats urged Biden to move on his own.

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It's uncertain whether the Senate would hold another vote on the commission and whether any additional Republicans would support it. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., left open the possibility of a second attempt, saying after the vote that "the events of Jan. 6 will be investigated."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., opposes the commission, saying he believes the panel would be partisan even though it would be divided evenly between the two parties. McConnell's criticism came after Trump opposed it and called the legislation a "Democrat trap."

Still, six in McConnell's caucus defied him, arguing that an independent look was needed, and Pennsylvania's Pat Toomey would have brought the total to seven but for a family commitment, his office said. The Republicans who voted to move forward on the bill were Sens. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Susan Collins of Maine, Ben Sasse of Nebraska, Rob Portman of Ohio and Mitt Romney of Utah.

The House passed the bill in May, with 35 Republicans voting with Democrats to pass it.

## Pot users welcome: Amazon won't test jobseekers for cannabis

By JOSEPH PISANI AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon said Tuesday that it will stop testing jobseekers for marijuana.

The company, the second-largest private employer in the U.S. behind Walmart, is making the change as states legalize cannabis or introduce laws banning employers from testing for it.

In March, a New York man sued Amazon, saying the company rescinded his job offer at an Amazon warehouse because he tested positive for marijuana, even though the city banned employers from testing job applicants for cannabis in 2020.

Amazon said in a blog post that it will still test workers for other drugs and conduct "impairment checks" on the job. And the company said some roles may still require a cannabis test in line with Department of Transportation regulations.

Seattle-based Amazon also said Tuesday that it will support the federal legalization of marijuana by pushing lawmakers to pass the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act of 2021.

## Biden suspends oil leases in Alaska's Arctic refuge

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration on Tuesday suspended oil and gas leases in Alaska's

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Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, reversing a drilling program approved by the Trump administration and reviving a political fight over a remote region that is home to polar bears and other wildlife — and a rich reserve of oil.

The order by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland follows a temporary moratorium on oil and gas lease activities imposed by President Joe Biden on his first day in office. Biden's Jan. 20 executive order suggested a new environmental review was needed to address possible legal flaws in a drilling program approved by the Trump administration under a 2017 law enacted by Congress.

After conducting a required review, Interior said it "identified defects in the underlying record of decision supporting the leases, including the lack of analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives" required under the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental law.

The remote, 19.6 million-acre refuge is home to polar bears, caribou, snowy owls and other wildlife, including migrating birds from six continents. Republicans and the oil industry have long been trying to open up the oil-rich refuge, which is considered sacred by the Indigenous Gwich'in, for drilling. Democrats, environmental groups and some Alaska Native tribes have been trying to block it.

Environmental groups and Democrats cheered the Interior Department order, while Alaska's all-Republican congressional delegation slammed it as misguided and illegal.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, an Interior agency, held a lease sale for the refuge's coastal plain on Jan. 6, two weeks before Biden took office. Eight days later the agency signed leases for nine tracts totaling nearly 685 square miles (1,770 square kilometers). However, the issuance of the leases was not announced publicly until Jan. 19, former President Donald Trump's last full day in office.

Biden has opposed drilling in the region, and environmental groups have been pushing for permanent protections, which Biden called for during the presidential campaign.

The administration's action to suspend the leases comes after officials disappointed environmental groups last week by defending a Trump administration decision to approve a major oil project on Alaska's North Slope. Critics say the action flies in the face of Biden's pledges to address climate change.

The Justice Department said in a court filing that opponents of the Willow project in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska were seeking to stop development by "cherry-picking" the records of federal agencies to claim environmental review law violations. The filing defends the reviews underpinning last fall's decision approving project plans.

Kristen Miller, acting executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League, hailed suspension of the Arctic leasing program, which she said was the result of a flawed legal process under Trump.

"Suspending these leases is a step in the right direction, and we commend the Biden administration for committing to a new program analysis that prioritizes sound science and adequate tribal consultation," she said.

More action is needed, Miller said, calling for a permanent cancellation of the leases and repeal of the 2017 law mandating drilling in the refuge's coastal plain.

The drilling mandate was included in a massive tax cut approved by congressional Republicans during Trump's first year in office. Republicans said it could generate an estimated \$1 billion over 10 years, a figure Democrats call preposterously overstated.

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., a longtime opponent of drilling in the refuge, accused the Trump administration of trying to "shortcut environmental laws." The effort "fell apart when exposed to the facts that federal scientists say Arctic Refuge drilling cannot be done safely and oil companies don't want to drill there," Cantwell said.

"Now it is up to Congress to permanently protect this irreplaceable, million-year-old ecosystem and facilitate new economic opportunities based on preserving America's pristine public lands for outdoor recreation," she said.

Bernadette Demientieff, executive director of the Gwich'in Nation Steering Committee, said in a statement that tribal leaders are heartened by the Biden administration's "commitment to protecting sacred lands and the Gwich'in way of life."

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She thanked Biden and Haaland "for hearing our voices and standing up for our human rights and identity." In a joint statement, Alaska Sens. Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski, along with Rep. Don Young and Gov. Mike Dunleavy, criticized the Interior Department action. All four are Republicans.

Dunleavy said the leases sold in January "are valid and cannot be taken away by the federal government." Sullivan, who praised Biden last week for backing the Willow oil project, said suspending the Arctic leases "goes against the law, facts, the science and the will of the Native communities on the North Slope. It is nothing more than a naked political move by the Biden administration to pay off its extreme environmental allies."

Murkowski called the order expected "but outrageous nonetheless."

Murkowski, who provided a key vote for Haaland's confirmation in March, said the secretarial order "is in direct conflict with the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," which "specifically states that the purpose of the (designated) area of ANWR is oil and gas development."

"This action serves no purpose other than to obstruct Alaska's economy and put our energy security at great risk," Murkowski said.

## Chauvin makes appearance on federal charges in Floyd's death

By AMY FORLITI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The former Minneapolis police officer convicted of murder in George Floyd's death made his initial appearance Tuesday on federal charges alleging he violated Floyd's civil rights by pinning the Black man to the pavement with his knee.

Derek Chauvin, 45, wore an orange prison shirt when he appeared in federal court via videoconference from Minnesota's maximum-security prison in Oak Park Heights, where he's being held as he awaits sentencing following his April conviction on murder and manslaughter charges.

Chauvin, in his first public appearance since he was escorted out of a Minnesota courtroom, was in a small room with a white brick wall behind him and a window in front of him. He wore a surgical mask at first but took it off when U.S. Magistrate Judge Becky Thorson said he could. He sat with his hands in front of him and occasionally took notes. He leaned forward and squinted slightly, as if he was listening intently, and leaned forward even more when he answered the judge's questions.

Chauvin stated his name and age, and said he understood the charges against him and his rights. When asked if he knew he had a right to a detention hearing, he said: "I do now, Your Honor... Probably in light of my current circumstances I believe that would be a moot point." After a brief off-record discussion with his attorney, Eric Nelson, he waived his right to a detention hearing and Thorson ordered him into federal custody.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections confirmed that he will be in federal custody but will stay in the state prison.

The federal charges allege Chauvin violated Floyd's rights as he restrained him face-down while he was handcuffed and not resisting. Three other former officers — J. Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao — face similar federal charges. Chauvin is also charged in a separate indictment alleging he violated the rights of a 14-year-old boy in 2017.

Floyd, 46, repeatedly said he couldn't breathe as Chauvin pinned him to the ground. Kueng and Lane helped restrain Floyd — Kueng knelt on Floyd's back and Lane held down Floyd's legs. Thao held back bystanders and kept them from intervening during the 9 1/2-minute restraint that was captured on bystander video and led to worldwide protests and calls for change in policing.

While all four officers are charged broadly with depriving Floyd of his rights while acting under government authority, the counts that name Chauvin allege he violated Floyd's right to be free from unreasonable seizure and from unreasonable force by a police officer. They also allege he and the others deprived Floyd of liberty without due process when they failed to provide him with medical care.

Nelson argued during Chauvin's murder trial that the officer acted reasonably and Floyd died because of underlying health issues and drug use. He has filed a request for a new trial.

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To bring federal charges in deaths involving police, prosecutors must believe an officer acted under the "color of law," or government authority, and willfully deprived someone's constitutional rights. That's a high legal standard. An accident, bad judgment or simple negligence on the officer's part isn't enough to support federal charges; prosecutors have to prove the officers knew what they were doing was wrong in that moment but did it anyway.

The federal case sends a strong message about the Justice Department's priorities. When President Joe Biden was elected, he promised he'd work to end disparities in the criminal justice system. Federal prosecutors have also brought hate crimes charges in the death of 25-year-old Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia, and the Justice Department has launched sweeping investigations into the police departments in Minneapolis and Louisville, Kentucky.

The other indictment against Chauvin alleges he deprived a then-14-year-old boy, who is Black, of his right to be free of unreasonable force when he held the teen by the throat, hit him in the head with a flashlight and held his knee on the boy's neck and upper back while he was prone, handcuffed and not resisting.

According to a police report from that 2017 encounter, Chauvin wrote the teen resisted arrest and that after the teen, whom he described as 6-foot-2 and about 240 pounds, was handcuffed, Chauvin "used body weight to pin" him to the floor. The boy was bleeding from the ear and needed two stitches.

Chauvin was convicted in April on state charges of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter in Floyd's death. Experts say he will likely face no more than 30 years in prison when he is sentenced June 25. If convicted in the federal case, any federal sentence would be served at the same time as his state sentence.

The other former officers face charges of aiding and abetting both second-degree murder and manslaughter. They are free on bond and face state trial in March.

## June 1st arrival gives NFL teams more flexibility

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

Now that the calendar has turned to June, NFL teams can trade or release players and spread the salary cap hit over two years instead of one.

That doesn't mean Aaron Rodgers is going anywhere but the Packers couldn't afford to deal him from a financial standpoint until now. Other star players such as Julio Jones and Zach Ertz are more likely to be moved.

The Philadelphia Eagles already released wide receiver Alshon Jeffery and defensive tackle Malik Jackson with a post-June 1st designation and the Minnesota Vikings did the same with tight end Kyle Rudolph.

With the salary cap expected to increase up to \$208.2 million in 2022, teams have more flexibility to make blockbuster moves now that this important date has arrived.

Here's a look at some players who could be traded or released:

### AARON RODGERS

The reigning NFL MVP has expressed his frustration with the Packers, but the team has insisted he's staying in Green Bay. The Packers would have incurred a \$38.4 million dead cap charge in 2021 by trading Rodgers before Tuesday. The Eagles took a record \$33.8 million hit this year when they sent Carson Wentz to Indianapolis. By waiting to move Rodgers, the Packers would free up \$22.85 million in salary cap space in 2021 and another \$25.5 million for 2022 while clearing the contract off the books entirely for 2023.

Of course, the club hasn't reached the point it wants to part with the three-time league MVP.

"We want him back in the worst way," Packers coach Matt LaFleur said last month during the team's rookie minicamp. "I know he knows that and we'll continue to work at it each and every day."

### JULIO JONES

The seven-time Pro Bowl wide receiver said last week that he's ready to leave Atlanta. The Falcons have salary cap issues and Jones counts \$23 million against it for 2021. Trading him now can save Atlanta \$15 million.

The 32-year-old Jones had 51 receptions for 771 yards and three touchdowns in nine games last season.



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He's guaranteed \$15.3 million this season but it's possible a team looking to acquire him will restructure his deal.

ZACH ERTZ

The three-time Pro Bowl tight end said goodbye to Philadelphia in a tear-filled news conference after the season, but Eagles general manager Howie Roseman hasn't found an acceptable trade offer.

The 30-year-old Ertz is coming off his worst season in which he caught just 36 passes for 335 yards and one TD in 11 games. He's scheduled to earn \$8.5 million this season.

Trading or releasing Ertz would clear \$8.5 million in cap space for the Eagles this year. He'd count \$4.2 million in dead money in 2021 and \$3.6 million in 2022.

DESHAUN WATSON

The three-time Pro Bowl quarterback wanted out of Houston, but his future is uncertain after 22 women filed lawsuits alleging Watson sexually assaulted or harassed them. Houston police and the NFL are investigating the allegations.

The Texans would've incurred \$21.6 million in dead cap money if they traded Watson before now. That number has been reduced to \$5.4 million. Still, his off-field issues must be resolved first.

"I have nothing to say about Deshaun," Texans coach David Culley said last week.

RUSSELL WILSON

The seven-time Pro Bowl quarterback became the topic of trade speculation when he raised questions about whether Seattle was doing enough to put a winning product around him, but Seahawks coach Pete Carroll and general manager John Schneider squashed those rumors in April.

Seattle would've taken a \$39 million cap hit by trading Wilson already. The amount has been reduced to \$13 million.

## Grand Slam leaders pledge to address Naomi Osaka's concerns

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

The leaders of the four Grand Slam tournaments reacted Tuesday to tennis star Naomi Osaka's stunning withdrawal from the French Open by promising to address players' concerns about mental health.

The pledge came in a statement signed by the same four tennis administrators who threatened the possibility of disqualification or suspension for Osaka on Sunday if she continued to skip news conferences.

The four-time major champion and No. 2-ranked player was fined \$15,000 when she didn't speak to reporters after her first-round victory at Roland Garros on Sunday. The next day, Osaka pulled out of the tournament entirely, saying she experiences "huge waves of anxiety" before meeting with the media and revealing she has "suffered long bouts of depression."

Osaka, a 23-year-old who was born in Japan and moved with her family to the U.S. at age 3, said she would "take some time away from the court now, but when the time is right I really want to work with the Tour to discuss ways we can make things better for the players, press and fans."

Tennis players are required to attend news conferences if requested to do so; Grand Slam rules allow for fines up to \$20,000 if they don't show up.

"On behalf of the Grand Slams, we wish to offer Naomi Osaka our support and assistance in any way possible as she takes time away from the court. She is an exceptional athlete and we look forward to her return as soon as she deems appropriate," Tuesday's statement from those in charge of the French Open, Wimbledon, U.S. Open and Australian Open said. "Mental health is a very challenging issue, which deserves our utmost attention. It is both complex and personal, as what affects one individual does not necessarily affect another. We commend Naomi for sharing in her own words the pressures and anxieties she is feeling and we empathize with the unique pressures tennis players may face."

French tennis federation President Gilles Moretton, All England Club Chairman Ian Hewitt, U.S. Tennis Association President Mike McNulty and Tennis Australia President Jayne Hrdlicka pledged to work with players, the tours and media "to improve the player experience at our tournaments" while making sure the athletes all are on a "fair playing field, regardless of ranking or status."

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In a separate statement issued Tuesday to the AP via email, International Tennis Federation official Heather Bowler said the sport will "review what needs to evolve" after Osaka "shone a light on mental health issues."

"It's in all our interests to ensure that we continue to provide a respectful and qualitative environment that enables all stakeholders to do their job to their best ability, without impacting their health, and for the good of the sport," Bowler wrote.

Various tennis players, including sisters Serena and Venus Williams, offered support for Osaka.

Venus Williams, a 40-year-old who has won seven Grand Slam singles titles and another 14 in doubles with her younger sibling, said at a news conference after her first-round loss Tuesday at Roland Garros that she finds it "definitely not easy to do press, I think, for any person."

Asked how she handled that over her professional career, Williams responded: "For me, personally, how I deal with it was that I know every single person asking me a question can't play as well as I can and never will, so no matter what you say or what you write, you'll never light a candle to me. So that's how I deal with it. But each person deals with it differently."

Others praised Osaka for being forthcoming about her personal story in her statement Monday on social media.

"It's hard. Nobody really knows what anyone is going through, no matter how much they choose to show on the outside. I had no idea about her. But I respect her openness," 20-year-old American pro Ann Li said after her victory. "Our generation is becoming more open and open, which can be a good thing and also a bad thing sometimes. I hope she's doing OK."

Gael Monfils, a 34-year-old from France who also won Tuesday, offered a sentiment surely shared by many around tennis, from tournament and tour officials to athletes to the sport's fans.

"We need Naomi. We need her definitely to be 100%," Monfils said. "We need her back on the court, back (at) the press conference — and back happy."

## AP Interview: Kremlin cracking down on dissent before vote

By HARRIET MORRIS and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian authorities are cracking down on dissent before a crucial parliamentary election in September, in what a leading Kremlin critic on Tuesday described as an attempt to sideline opponents.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky, a Russian tycoon who moved to London after spending a decade in prison in Russia on charges widely seen as political revenge for challenging President Vladimir Putin's rule, said the latest moves against opposition activists reflected the authorities' concern about the waning popularity of the main Kremlin-directed party, United Russia.

Khodorkovsky told The Associated Press in an interview over Zoom that the upcoming election is a "theatrical performance, in which any candidates that the government isn't happy with will simply not be allowed to run." He said that the authorities are increasing repression to stifle any critical voices before the Sept. 19 parliamentary election, including activists of the Open Russia movement that he financed.

Open Russia dissolved itself last week. Andrei Pivovarov, the organization's head, was pulled off a Warsaw-bound plane at St. Petersburg's airport just before takeoff late Monday. Pivovarov was taken on Tuesday to Krasnodar in southern Russia as part of a criminal probe targeting him.

Also Tuesday, police raided the country home of opposition politician Dmitry Gudkov and detained him. Gudkov, a former lawmaker, has aspired to run for Russia's parliament. At least two of his associates also had their homes searched.

Khodorkovsky said the authorities are taking preemptive action against the opposition, fearing the September election could trigger protests.

"The government is afraid of potential protests that could emerge if they cheat too flagrantly," Khodorkovsky told the AP. "They are trying to sanitize the political environment before the election."

He added that he would continue to support opposition candidates despite the official pressure.

Last week, Pivovarov announced that Open Russia was shutting down to protect its members from

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prosecution after Russian authorities designated it as “undesirable.” The government already has outlawed more than 30 groups using a 2015 law that made membership in “undesirable” organizations a criminal offense. Another bill now making its way through parliament increases the punishment for members of those groups.

In a letter from custody that his lawyers posted Tuesday on Pivovarov’s Instagram account, he said “there is no cause for joy, but I don’t feel despondent.”

He added: “There is a plan to put any people with a different view under arrest, but such people already are the majority.”

The probe focuses on Pivovarov’s support for a candidate in local elections on behalf of an “undesirable” organization. His lawyers said the charges were filed after he declared Open Russia’s closure.

Amnesty International, meanwhile, strongly condemned Pivovarov’s arrest and demanded his release.

“This is an audacious move by the Kremlin in its continued use of the law on ‘undesirable’ organizations to target and shut down critics,” said Natalia Zviagina, the director of the group’s Moscow office. “The Russian authorities must end reprisals against their political opponents and other critical voices in the country.”

In March, police briefly detained about 200 participants of a forum of municipal council members that Open Russia helped organize.

Putin’s most determined political foe, Alexei Navalny, was arrested in January upon his return from Germany, where he had spent five months recovering from a nerve agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin — accusations that Russian officials reject. He was handed a 2 1/2-year prison sentence in February for violating terms of a suspended sentence stemming from a 2014 embezzlement conviction that he denounced as politically driven.

With Navalny in prison, prosecutors have asked a Moscow court to designate his Foundation for Fighting Corruption and his network of regional offices as extremist groups. In a parallel move, a bill approved by the lower house of the Russian parliament bars members, donors and supporters of extremist groups from seeking public office — a measure that would keep Navalny’s associates from running for parliament in September.

Khodorkovsky argued that the parliamentary election is important for Putin to cement his rule ahead of the 2024 Russian presidential election.

The 68-year-old Putin has been in power for more than two decades — longer than any other Kremlin leader since Soviet dictator Josef Stalin/ He pushed through constitutional changes last year that enable him to run again in 2024, when his current six-year term ends. The changes would allow him to potentially hold onto power until 2036.

## **Sinovac vaccine restores a Brazilian city to near normal**

By MAURICIO SAVARESE Associated Press

SERRANA, Brazil (AP) — Just one COVID-19 patient is in critical condition at the Dr. Geraldo Cesar Reis clinic in Serrana, a city of almost 46,000 in Sao Paulo state’s countryside. The 63-year-old woman rejected the vaccine that was offered to every adult resident of Serrana as part of a trial.

Doctors say the woman was awaiting one of Pfizer’s shots, which remain scarce in Brazil. But she is an outlier here. Most adults rolled up their sleeves when offered the vaccine made by the Chinese pharmaceutical company Sinovac, and the experiment has transformed the community into an oasis of near normalcy in a country where many communities continue to suffer.

Doctors who treated COVID-19 in Serrana have seen their patient loads evaporate. They now help colleagues with other diseases and recently started eating lunch at home. Life has returned to the streets: Neighbors chat and families have weekend barbecues. Outsiders who previously had no reason to set foot in Serrana are arriving for haircuts and restaurant outings.

“We’re now as full as we used to be,” Rogério Silva, a staffer at a store for cheap refreshments and snacks, said in an interview. “Weeks ago, people wouldn’t form a line in here, wouldn’t eat in, and I wouldn’t let them use the bathroom. Now it’s back.”

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The success story emerged as other population centers keep struggling with the virus, enduring rising infections and new government-imposed restrictions. Meanwhile, the vaccine appeared headed for wider use. The World Health Organization on Tuesday granted emergency use authorization to the Sinovac shot for people 18 and over, the second such authorization it has granted to a Chinese company.

The experiment known as "Project S" lasted four months and tested Sinovac's shot in real-world conditions. The preliminary results made public Monday suggest the pandemic can be controlled if three-quarters of the population is fully vaccinated with Sinovac, said Ricardo Palacios, a director at Sao Paulo state's Butantan Institute and coordinator of the study, which was not peer-reviewed.

"The most important result was understanding that we can control the pandemic even without vaccinating the entire population," Palacios said.

The results offer hope to hundreds of millions of people, especially in developing nations. Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia, Zimbabwe and others are likewise reliant on the Chinese shot, which is cheaper than vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna.

The city's population was split into four geographic areas regardless of age and gender, and most adults received two shots by the end of April. Results released Monday showed that the pandemic was controlled after three of the areas had been vaccinated. It was not clear if vaccine uptake was the same in each area.

Serrana saw vast improvements: Deaths fell by 95%, hospitalizations by 86% and symptomatic cases by 80%.

The project "shows the protection exists and that the vaccine is effective. No doubt," Gonzalo Vecina, one of the founders of Brazil's health regulator and a medical school professor, told The Associated Press.

Likewise, Denise Garrett, vice president of the Sabin Vaccine Institute, which advocates for expanding global vaccine access, called the results "good and very encouraging."

Both Vecina and Garrett said unanswered questions remain and that more data is needed to properly analyze the results, including information about people who got shots but did not develop immunity.

The spread of the virus in Serrana slowed while neighboring communities like Ribeirao Preto, just 12 miles west, saw COVID-19 surge. The upswing was largely blamed on more contagious variants.

Hospitals in Ribeirao Preto are so full of COVID-19 patients that the mayor imposed strict shutdown measures last week, including halting public transportation and limiting hours for the city's 700,000 residents to buy groceries. Some will wait months for their vaccines. Almost all shops are closed, and 95% of intensive-care unit beds are occupied by virus patients.

Elmano Silveira, 54, works at a local drugstore and for the first time wishes he lived in Serrana, which was looked down upon before the vaccination drive.

"My friends from there used to call me all the time. ... Now I'm the one calling them," Silveira said. "Before the pandemic, we had a big city vibe here. It was really busy. Now it's like a desert."

Just months ago, it was Serrana struggling to cope, according to Dr. João Antonio Madalosso Jr. For every patient who recovered in the first three months of 2021, two more arrived in bad shape, he said.

"Then, by the end of January, we heard this project was coming to Serrana. And calmness set in, little by little," said Madalosso, 32, as he pointed at empty seats of the hospital's COVID-19 ward. "Just look at this. This is much calmer than Ribeirao Preto and the entire region. The vaccine is no cure, but it is the solution to transform this into a light flu so people can carry on."

That doesn't mean Serrana is entirely rid of the virus. Some residents refused to get the shot. Others skipped the second dose or got infected before the vaccine took full effect. A few had prior diseases that prevented them from getting the vaccines.

Brazil's president, Jair Bolsonaro, has repeatedly cast doubt on the shot's efficacy. He said last year his administration wouldn't buy the Chinese vaccine and that he wouldn't let Brazilians become "guinea pigs." His health ministry signed a deal to buy tens of millions of doses only after Brazil's health regulator approved the shot in January.

Had the government acted sooner, Brazil could have had twice as many Sinovac vaccines by now — 100 million doses, Butantan's head, Dimas Covas, told a congressional inquiry last week. The shot accounts for half the vaccines made available to date in the country.



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Vaccines arrived too late for some of the 463,000 people who have died from COVID-19 in Brazil, which has the world's second-highest death toll.

The relative return to normal "could be happening all over Brazil if it were not for the delay in vaccinations," said João Doria, Sao Paulo's governor and an adversary of Bolsonaro. "These results show there's only one way to control the pandemic: vaccines, vaccines, vaccines."

Bolsonaro-fueled skepticism of Sinovac's shot reached Serrana. It didn't help that Sao Paulo state's release of efficacy data was confusing, with Doria initially claiming 78% protection against mild cases on Jan. 7, then revising that five days later to 50.4%, barely above the level required by health authorities.

Carmen da Silva Cunha, 81, has lost friends to the virus, and she got vaccinated despite "a lot of people trying to get into my head regarding the vaccine."

"Serrana got better, but it could be much more if a lot of people had taken their second shot," she said in an interview at the hospital, where she sought treatment for a sore throat. She tested negative for COVID-19, and doctors expected her to return home in short order.

Mayor Leo Capitanelli is pleased with results. Standing beside a health screening station on the road into the city, he said people have had only mild and moderate COVID-19 cases in recent weeks. And he boasted about Serrana's plan to host a music festival for about 5,000 spectators, all vaccinated with Sinovac's shot.

"This project brought our pride back," he said. "And it will bring hope for a fresh start next year."

## 'Still on the farm': NY State Police struggles to diversify

By JIM MUSTIAN and CAMILLE FASSETT Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — An equal blend of black and white thread, the gray uniform worn by the New York State Police stands for the impartiality of justice.

But this attire belies disparities within the agency, which for generations has failed to fill its ranks with troopers who reflect New York's diverse population.

The agency remains overwhelmingly white — an imbalance some troopers say is rooted in a legacy of racism.

Of more than 4,700 troopers, only 4% are Black and 6% are Hispanic — paltry proportions compared to the 16% and 19% of the state population those groups constitute.

A half-dozen minority troopers told The Associated Press discrimination has flourished within the ranks, despite the agency having been ordered to diversify by a judge in the 1970s.

One Black former State Police investigator, Michael Marin, recalled a white colleague admonishing him in 2008 to "take the cotton you've been picking out your ears."

"It was like I was still on the farm," said Marin, who retired in 2019. "It didn't seem extraordinary to me because that's how that job was."

Trooper Lethonia Miller filed a complaint against a white supervisor for using racial slurs more than a dozen times in his presence. He said "the culture in the State Police was systemically racist."

"No matter where I was or what I was doing, I was always reminded that I was Black," said Miller, who retired in 2016 and is suing the agency for retaliation. "It's depressing to work as hard as you can and still be considered less than your white male counterparts. Every time I heard the word it was as if I was being told, 'You're second class.'"

Current leaders acknowledge the agency's lack of diversity has become more urgent amid a national reckoning over racial injustice.

"You can't just keep doing the same thing and expect different results," acting Superintendent Kevin Bruen said in an interview. "We patrol the state, so our ethnic breakdown should roughly mirror that. To say it's a priority for me would be an understatement."

New York's is not the only state police force far whiter than its state population. All 38 state police departments that provided demographic data to the AP had a disproportionately high number of white troopers, when compared to each state's population.

The Maryland State Police, for instance, is over 80% non-Hispanic white; that demographic group makes up only half the state's population. And although 30% of the Maryland population is non-Hispanic Black,

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only 12% of the state police force is Black.

The U.S. Justice Department sued New York in 1977 for discriminating against minorities in promoting and hiring troopers, who patrol New York's highways, and, in some parts of the state, respond to 911 calls and investigate crimes.

At the time, just 13 of the agency's 2,712 troopers were Black. A federal judge mandated that 40% of recruits entering the State Police training academy be Black or Hispanic, seeking to bring minority representation in line with the state's workforce.

The same judge dissolved the remedial hiring goals in 1989 after the agency managed to increase its Black and Hispanic representation to 9% and 6%, respectively. The consent decree was quietly lifted in its entirety in 2015 after the state argued it had made "great strides."

The percentage of Black troopers had fallen to 6% by mid-2014 and has continued to decline.

Pedro Perez, a former New York State Police deputy superintendent who retired in 2010, said the consent decree was dissolved without any inquiry into "whether the attitudes of the officers and leadership was sufficiently changed."

Those percentages of minorities, who are also underrepresented in senior leadership positions, are "as good as almost nothing," said Michael Jenkins, a policing expert who teaches criminal justice at the University of Scranton. "The agency is in a tough position to argue otherwise."

Bruen, who assumed command of the State Police last year, agrees the agency's minority recruitment program needs work.

In one step, the agency is abandoning a requirement that potential recruits take tests in person at state police buildings that can be difficult to reach and allowing candidates to do the exams electronically.

"You could take this test in Okinawa, Japan, and still get onto our list," Bruen said.

"What we need to do is reach people who don't necessarily picture themselves as troopers," Bruen added. "I firmly believe that being a great trooper is working for social justice and working for positive change."

State Police brass acknowledge change won't come easily, particularly at a time when law enforcement agencies seek to rebuild trust in minority communities. The same challenges exist within the agency.

Kim Bryson, a senior State Police investigator on Long Island, provided AP a copy of an image a white colleague hung in her office. Superimposing her face on that of a Black woman at work in a kitchen, it was captioned "House of Chitlins" — a reference to food scraps given to slaves.

"It basically solidified for me who I was dealing with," Bryson said, adding the incident happened eight or nine years ago. "I look forward to the day when I can honestly say the State Police takes racism seriously. Part and parcel of the problem is that it's not punished. You might suspend someone, but there's no educational arm to that."

Another former deputy superintendent, Anthony Ellis, recalled a disciplinary case involving a white trooper who pulled over a Black motorist driving with a young white woman asleep in his passenger seat with a pillow and blanket. The trooper ordered the woman out of the vehicle to ensure she was alright.

Ellis, who led the State Police internal affairs bureau at the time, said a fellow ranking officer found no issue with the trooper's directive, explaining it "could have been a carjacking."

"I wasn't as upset at the trooper — we can train him," said Ellis, who is Black. "But I told my (colleague), 'If you think someone doing a carjacking brings a pillow and a blanket, you're in the wrong line of work.'"

Tensions built last year after the heads of both the troopers and investigators unions backed Donald Trump for reelection. "Troopers for Trump" T-shirts began circulating at New York State Police barracks.

"It created this real problem for members of color," who weren't consulted before the endorsements, Bryson said.

It was then Bryson decided to revive an organization known as the Guardians Association to represent the voice of minority troopers.

"We're really at a crossroads," Bryson said. "I still think that gray in the uniform can be impartial. We just have to strive to make it a perfect blend."

## Despite vaccines, nursing homes struggle with outbreaks

By SUSAN HAIGH Associated Press

Jeannie Wells had hoped that regular visits would resume at her elderly mother's New York nursing home once all the residents were fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Around Easter, her wish finally came true, and she was able to hold the 93-year-old's hand more than a year after bringing her mother to the facility for rehabilitation for a fractured hip and knee.

But that reunion was short-lived. Visits were quickly stopped for about six weeks after an employee tested positive for COVID, and Wells said visits are still far from normal even when there haven't been outbreaks.

COVID-19 vaccines have allowed nursing homes in the U.S. to make dramatic progress since the dark days of the pandemic, but senior care facilities are still experiencing scattered outbreaks that are largely blamed on unvaccinated staff members. The outbreaks and ensuing shutdowns have jolted family members who were just starting to enjoy in-person visits with loved ones for the first time in a year.

While the outbreaks inside nursing homes now are much smaller, less frequent and less severe than during the height of the pandemic, there continue to be hundreds of deaths each week attributed to the coronavirus. According to federal data, 472 nursing home deaths were related to COVID-19 in the first two weeks of May, down from 10,675 in the first two weeks of January.

"There is this notion among some that vaccines were administered in long-term care, so we're done, and that would be a perilous mistake," said Dr. David Gifford, chief medical officer for the American Health Care Association, a national nursing home trade association, in a recent statement. "Nursing homes and assisted living communities have a constant flow of new residents, whether coming from the hospital or the community, and many of them haven't been vaccinated yet."

In addition, the CDC has warned that low rates of vaccination among health care workers in skilled nursing facilities raises risks of outbreaks.

A March outbreak involving a variant at a Kentucky nursing home, where most residents had been vaccinated for COVID-19, was traced to an infected, unvaccinated worker, according to a CDC report. Among the 46 cases identified, 26 residents and 20 workers became infected, including 18 residents and four workers who were fully vaccinated 14 days before the outbreak.

Three of the nursing home's residents who contracted COVID-19 died, including two who were not vaccinated. So-called "breakthrough" infections among vaccinated individuals were also identified in nursing homes in Chicago, according to another recent CDC report.

In Connecticut, Gov. Ned Lamont has likened the challenge of keeping the virus out of nursing homes to patching up "leaky boats." The state Department of Public Health launched Operation Matchmaker to match nursing homes with certain pharmacies to ensure new residents and staff get shots. Hospitals are also working to vaccinate patients before they're released to a nursing facility.

Given staffing shortages around the country, there's been a hesitance among long-term care providers to mandate vaccinations for their workers, said Dr. Vivian Leung, director of the state's Department of Health's Healthcare Associated Infections Program.

"We're working with the long-term care industry to really increase the pressure on getting those staff vaccinated," Leung said.

Tim Brown, director of marketing and communications at Athena Health Care Systems, which operates 48 facilities in Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, recently estimated about 50% to 60% of staff have been vaccinated so far, with as many as 80% in some buildings.

"Throughout our network, we are seeing onesies and twosies, mostly with employees, though, that have not been vaccinated. That's really where we're seeing them," Brown said of the infections. If a staff member tests positive, he said, buildings are put under quarantine and visits are put on hold while another round of staff testing is conducted. Unvaccinated staff are being tested regularly.

"If there are no other cases, or if the employee did not work on a specific wing, then we allow visitation for that wing or for the wings that are not affected by the positive employee," he said.

Mairead Painter, Connecticut's long-term care ombudsman, said recent guidance from the state has clari-

fied how facilities should handle these scattered outbreaks in order to minimize the impact they can have on the rest of residents and their families. She said that's led to fewer complaints fielded by her office.

But Debra Ellis, whose 88-year-old wife Jackie lives in a Meriden, Conn. nursing home, said the rules still differ by facility. Until recently, she had been frustrated by the strict visitation limits, including sudden multi-day shutdowns when staff members have tested positive. Both she and her wife are vaccinated.

By mid-May, things finally eased up and she's been allowed to go inside her wife's room. Yet Ellis hears from relatives of residents at other nursing homes that that's not the case at other facilities in Connecticut.

Ellis is part of a group that's pushing for both state and federal legislation allowing nursing home residents to have essential caregivers. She said that could have helped her wife, who suffers from heart problems and relied on Ellis before the pandemic for emotional support and exercises to keep her legs strong.

"She could get up and walk a very small distance around the room to move to the bed to a chair or whatever," she said. "She's not longer able to do that."

That's a similar experience for Wells, who said the nursing home where her mother lives still has no communal dining, group activities or hairdressing services. Wells, who lives in Rochester, said it was only last week that she was offered the opportunity to meet with her mother outside and without masks. But after spending so much time isolated during the pandemic, Wells said her mother no longer knows who she is, other than someone who cares about her.

She said it pains her to see her mother, who used to get her hair done weekly, looking unkept, with bangs hanging in her eyes and hair down to her shoulders.

"This nursing home never allowed us into their rooms. We have to stay in an ugly dining room that's been stripped and all the furniture stacked in the corner and in four little pods of tables pushed together and staff staring at you the whole time," she said, adding: "None of that has changed because they're allowing nursing homes to do their own thing."

## Woman donates kidney to hubby's ex-wife days after wedding

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Ten years after their first date, Debby Neal-Strickland put on a cream-colored lace gown and married her longtime sweetheart at their Florida church. Two days later, she put on a hospital gown and donated a kidney to Mylaen Merthe — her new husband's ex-wife.

An unusual story? Yes. But the tale of Jim Merthe and his two wives is a testament to how love and compassion can triumph over division.

Mylaen, 59, had long struggled with kidney disease. By last year, she was ghostly pale with dark circles under her eyes, dragging herself through the workday with no energy. By the time she was admitted to the hospital in November, her kidneys were only functioning at 8%.

Her brother offered to donate a kidney, but wasn't a match so Debby volunteered.

Jim and Mylaen have been divorced nearly two decades, but they got along well as they raised their two children, and as Jim fell in love with 56-year-old Debby. The women were friendly at family gatherings, though not especially close.

And Debby knew that Mylaen was about to become a grandmother for the first time — her daughter was pregnant.

She imagined Mylaen's daughter giving birth, "and her mom not being there. I just couldn't not try to change that," she said. "God told me, 'You're a match and you need to do this.'"

Giving is what Debby and Jim do. At their home in Ocala, they are raising six children — a 6-year-old girl with autism and five teenagers. Some are Debby's biological grandchildren and some they are fostering.

But Debby's desire to help Mylaen ran deeper. She spent years watching her brother die of cystic fibrosis while awaiting a double lung transplant. She offered one of her lungs, but she wasn't a match and he needed two.

"When somebody needs an organ, if they don't get it, they're probably not going to make it. I know it's something that you do quickly," she said.



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Debby passed the initial match for blood and tissue and began more complex testing while juggling a house full of kids — and at one point, toting a urine collection jug for 24 hours.

Mylaen tried desperately not to get her hopes up, focusing instead on her future as a grandmother.

Debby “knew that’s all I ever wanted,” she said. She “did it from her heart.”

After months of testing and COVID delays, the transplant was set for two days after Jim and Debby’s wedding. Debby was tempted to postpone the wedding, but friends discouraged her. The couple had already waited 10 years, canceling twice in deference to their children who announced their own engagements.

They married Nov. 22. Jim wore a gray suit with a yellow shirt, “because he’s my single yellow rose,” Debby said.

“It was the most amazing day of my life, until two days later. That was also the most amazing day of my life,” she said.

As soon as she regained consciousness, the new bride asked about Mylaen. A few floors below, Mylaen was also pleading with the nurses — “‘I need to see her.’ That was the first thing out of my mouth.”

COVID-19 protocols were strict, but Jim was eventually allowed to wheel his new wife into his ex-wife’s room.

“We had our masks on too, so we’re crying, and of course our stomachs were hurting because of the incisions,” Mylaen said. “We kinda laughed and cried.”

Debby could already see the difference. The circles under Mylaen’s eyes were gone, “she looked so alive and revitalized.”

Mylaen moved in with her daughter, son-in-law and new baby Jackson to recuperate.

“I got to hold him and feed him,” said Mylaen, who welcomed a second grandson in March. “I was like, ‘I’m actually here to see this and I’m holding this little baby.’”

The women call themselves kidney sisters, pray for each other, coo over their grandbabies and are planning a big family trip to Lake Rabun, Georgia, this summer.

“This is what the world is about. Family. We need to stick together,” Mylaen said. “She saved my life.”

## Japan’s vaccine push ahead of Olympics looks to be too late

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — It may be too little, too late.

That’s the realization sinking in as Japan scrambles to catch up on a frustratingly slow vaccination drive less than two months before the Summer Olympics, delayed by a year because of the coronavirus pandemic, are scheduled to start.

The Olympics risk becoming an incubator for “a Tokyo variant,” as 15,000 foreign athletes and tens of thousands officials, sponsors and journalists from about 200 countries descend on — and potentially mix with — a largely unvaccinated Japanese population, said Dr. Naoto Ueyama, a physician, head of the Japan Doctors Union.

With infections in Tokyo and other heavily populated areas currently at high levels and hospitals already under strain treating serious cases despite a state of emergency, experts have warned there is little slack in the system.

Even if the country succeeds in meeting its goal of fully vaccinating all 36 million elderly by the end of July — already a week into the Games — about 70% of the population would not be inoculated. And many have dismissed the target as overly optimistic anyway.

To meet it, Japan is vowing to soon start administering 1 million doses daily. It currently is only giving 500,000 per day, already a big improvement after Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga called on military doctors and nurses and started making legal exceptions to recruit other vaccinators in order to boost the drive.

“Vaccinations under the current pace are not going to help prevent infections during the Olympics,” Tokyo Medical Association Chairman Haruo Ozaki said. “The Olympics can trigger a global spread of different variants of the virus.”

The International Olympic Committee says more than 80% of athletes and staff staying in the Olympic

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Village on Tokyo Bay will be vaccinated — and they are expected to remain largely in a bubble at the village and venues. On Tuesday, Japan started vaccinating athletes who will go to the Games, the Japanese Olympic Committee said.

But vaccination rates are not clear for others involved in the Games who are coming from abroad, including hard-hit regions, and experts warn that even strict rules won't prevent all mingling, especially among non-athletes. Spectators from overseas have been barred.

Prominent medical journals have questioned the wisdom of pushing ahead with the Tokyo Games and the Asahi Shimbun — the country's second-largest newspaper — has called for them to be canceled, reflecting widespread opposition to holding the Olympics now among the Japanese population.

But the government has said it's determined to push ahead, with the viability of Suga's leadership and geopolitical competition with rival Beijing, the next Olympics host, as well as the health of millions, on the line.

"By using a new weapon called vaccines and taking firm preventive measures, it is fully possible" to hold the Olympics safely, Suga told a parliamentary session Tuesday.

Officials are now desperately trying to think of ways to increase the shots at a time when medical workers are already under pressure treating COVID-19 patients. Many say they have no extra resources to help with the Olympics, if, for instance, the boiling Japanese summer causes widespread cases of heat stroke. Some local leaders in and around Tokyo have rejected the Olympics organizers' requests to set aside beds for athletes.

Dr. Shigeru Omi, former World Health Organization regional director and a head of a government task-force, said it is crucial to start inoculating younger people, who are seen as likely to spread the virus, as soon as possible.

More than three months into Japan's vaccination campaign, only 2.7% of the population has been fully vaccinated. The country started its rollout with health care workers in mid-February, months behind many other countries because Japan required additional clinical testing here, a step many experts say was medically meaningless.

Inoculations for the elderly, who are more likely to suffer serious problems when infected, started in mid-April, but were slowed by initial supply shortages, cumbersome reservation procedures and a lack of medical workers to give shots.

But there are signs of improvement. The vaccine supply has increased and despite earlier expectations of a hesitant response to vaccines in general, senior citizens fearful of the virus are rushing to inoculation sites.

Since May 24, Japan has deployed 280 military doctors and nurses in Tokyo and the badly hit city of Osaka. More than 33,000 vaccination sites now operate across Japan, and more are coming, said Taro Kono, the minister in charge of vaccinations.

In Sumida, a district in downtown Tokyo where boxing events will be held, vaccinations for its 61,000 elderly residents began on May 10, and within two weeks, 31% of them had gotten their first shots, compared to the national average of 3.7%. Sumida is now looking to start inoculating younger people later this month, well ahead of schedule.

Close coordination among primary care doctors, hospitals and residents, as well as flexibility, have contributed to smooth progress, Sumida district spokesperson Yosuke Yatabe said.

"It's like a factory line," Yatabe said.

Ryuichiro Suzuki, a 21-year-old university student in Tokyo, said he is frustrated with Japan's lagging vaccination campaign.

"I saw that some of my friends overseas have been vaccinated, but my turn won't come until later this summer," he said. "The risk-averse government took extra caution even when our primary goal was to get back to normal as soon as possible."

Kono, the vaccine minister, said more large-scale inoculation centers are getting underway, including at hundreds of college campuses and offices to start vaccinating younger people from June 21.

Beyond the concerns about the Olympics and despite the fact that Japan has seen fewer cases and deaths compared to the United States and other advanced nations, the country's slow pace of vaccinations

and its prolonged, often toothless state of emergency could also delay its economic recovery for months, said Masaya Sasaki, senior economist at the Nomura Research Institute.

And despite repeated expressions of official government confidence in the Games being safe, there are fears here of what might happen if vaccinations don't pick up.

"The Olympics, billed as a recovery Games, can trigger a new disaster," said Ueyama, of the Japan Doctors Union.

## **Greece, Germany kick off EU vaccination travel certificates**

By DEREK GATOPOULOS and LORNE COOK Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Greece, Germany and five other European Union nations introduced a vaccination certificate system for travelers on Tuesday, weeks ahead of the July 1 rollout of the program across the 27-nation bloc.

The other countries starting early were Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Croatia and Poland, according to the European Commission.

Greece, which depends heavily on tourism, has been pressing for the commonly-recognized certificate that uses a QR code with advanced security features. The certificates are being issued to people who are fully vaccinated as well as those who have already contracted the virus and developed antibodies and others who have had a PCR test within the last 72 hours.

The documents will have both digital and paper forms. They'll be free of charge, distributed in the national language plus English and be valid in all the bloc's countries.

"EU citizens are looking forward to travelling again, and they want to do so safely. Having an EU certificate is a crucial step on the way," EU Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides said.

Greece's digital governance minister, Kyriakos Pierrakakis, said easier travel will open up within the EU as nations adopt the new verification standard.

"What will happen is that countries will stop issuing certificates using their own convention and adopt the common convention. That will simplify things considerably, because you can imagine the number of bilateral agreements that would otherwise need to be worked out," Pierrakakis told private Skai television.

Kyriakides said in the next few weeks, all EU nations need to "fully finalize their national systems to issue, store and verify certificates, so the system is functioning in time for the holiday season."

Countries will be allowed to add extra vaccines to their individual entry list, including those that have not been formally approved for use across the EU.

The EU Commission believes that people who are vaccinated should no longer have to be tested or put into quarantines, regardless of where they are travelling to or from, starting 14 days after receiving their second shot.

Member countries, however, have not yet endorsed that recommendation.

## **In Brazil's Amazon, rivers rise to record levels**

By FERNANDO CRISPIM and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

MANAUS, Brazil (AP) — Rivers around the biggest city in Brazil's Amazon rainforest have swelled to levels unseen in over a century of record-keeping, according to data published Tuesday by Manaus' port authorities, straining a society that has grown weary of increasingly frequent flooding.

The Rio Negro was at its highest level since records began in 1902, with a depth of 29.98 meters (98 feet) at the port's measuring station. The nearby Solimoes and Amazon rivers were also nearing all-time highs, flooding streets and houses in dozens of municipalities and affecting some 450,000 people in the region.

Higher-than-usual precipitation is associated with the La Nina phenomenon, when currents in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean affect global climate patterns. Environmental experts and organizations including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say there is strong evidence that human activity and global warming are altering the frequency and intensity

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of extreme weather events, including La Nina.

Seven of the 10 biggest floods in the Amazon basin have occurred in the past 13 years, data from Brazil's state-owned Geological Survey shows.

"If we continue to destroy the Amazon the way we do, the climatic anomalies will become more and more accentuated," said Virgílio Viana, director of the Sustainable Amazon Foundation, a nonprofit. "Greater floods on the one hand, greater droughts on the other."

Large swaths of Brazil are currently drying up in a severe drought, with a possible shortfall in power generation from the nation's hydroelectric plants and increased electricity prices, government authorities have warned.

But in Manaus, 66-year-old Julia Simas has water ankle-deep in her home. Simas has lived in the working-class neighborhood of Sao Jorge since 1974 and is used to seeing the river rise and fall with the seasons. Simas likes her neighborhood because it is safe and clean. But the quickening pace of the floods in the last decade has her worried.

"From 1974 until recently, many years passed and we wouldn't see any water. It was a normal place," she said.

When the river does overflow its banks and flood her street, she and other residents use boards and beams to build rudimentary scaffolding within their homes to raise their floors above the water.

"I think human beings have contributed a lot (to this situation)," she said. "Nature doesn't forgive. She comes and doesn't want to know whether you're ready to face her or not."

Flooding also has a significant impact on local industries such as farming and cattle ranching. Many family-run operations have seen their production vanish under water. Others have been unable to reach their shops, offices and market stalls or clients.

"With these floods, we're out of work," said Elias Gomes, a 38-year-old electrician in Cacau Pirera, on the other side of the Rio Negro, though noted he's been able to earn a bit by transporting neighbors in his small wooden boat.

Gomes is now looking to move to a more densely populated area where floods won't threaten his livelihood.

Limited access to banking in remote parts of the Amazon can make things worse for residents, who are often unable to get loans or financial compensation for lost production, said Viana, of the Sustainable Amazon Foundation. "This is a clear case of climate injustice: Those who least contributed to global warming and climate change are the most affected."

Meteorologists say Amazon water levels could continue to rise slightly until late June or July, when floods usually peak.

## Justices reject Johnson & Johnson appeal of \$2B talc verdict

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is leaving in place a \$2 billion verdict in favor of women who claim they developed ovarian cancer from using Johnson & Johnson talc products.

The justices did not comment Tuesday in rejecting Johnson & Johnson's appeal. The company argued that it was not treated fairly in facing one trial involving 22 cancer sufferers who came from 12 states and different backgrounds.

A Missouri jury initially awarded the women \$4.7 billion, but a state appeals court dropped two women from the suit and reduced the award to \$2 billion. The jury found that the company's talc products contain asbestos and asbestos-laced talc can cause ovarian cancer. The company disputes both points.

Johnson & Johnson, which is based in New Brunswick, New Jersey, has stopped selling its iconic talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in the U.S. and Canada, though it remains on the market elsewhere.

But the company faces thousands of lawsuits from women who claim asbestos in the powder caused their cancer. Talc is a mineral similar in structure to asbestos, which is known to cause cancer, and they are sometimes obtained from the same mines. The cosmetics industry in 1976 agreed to make sure its



talc products do not contain detectable amounts of asbestos.

The lead attorney for the women during the trial, Mark Lanier, praised the court's refusal to hear Johnson & Johnson's appeal. "This decision sends a clear message to the rich and powerful: You will be held to account when you cause grievous harm under our system of equal justice under law," Lanier said.

Justices Samuel Alito and Brett Kavanaugh took no part in the court's action. Alito owns \$15,000 to \$50,000 in Johnson & Johnson stock. Kavanaugh's father headed the trade association that lobbied against labeling talc a carcinogen and including a warning label on talc products.

Ethicists contacted by The Associated Press said they did not think E. Edward Kavanaugh's role required his son to step aside from the case.

## Vatican law criminalizes abuse of adults by priests, laity

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis has changed Catholic Church law to explicitly criminalize the sexual abuse of adults by priests who abuse their authority and to say that laypeople who hold church office also can be sanctioned for similar sex crimes.

The new provisions, released Tuesday after 14 years of study, were contained in the revised criminal law section of the Vatican's Code of Canon Law, the in-house legal system that covers the 1.3 billion-member Catholic Church and operates independently from civil laws.

The most significant changes are contained in two articles, 1395 and 1398, which aim to address shortcomings in the church's handling of sexual abuse. The law recognizes that adults, not only children, can be victimized by priests who abuse their authority. The revisions also say that laypeople holding church positions, such as school principals or parish economists, can be punished for abusing minors as well as adults.

The Vatican also criminalized priests "grooming" minors or vulnerable adults to compel them to engage in pornography. The update represents the first time church law has officially recognized as a criminal act the method used by sexual predators to build relationships with victims they have targeted for sexual exploitation.

The new law, which is set to take effect on Dec. 8, also removes much of the discretion that long allowed bishops and religious superiors to ignore or cover up abuse, making clear those in positions of authority will be held responsible if they fail to properly investigate or sanction predator priests.

A bishop can be removed from office for "culpable negligence" or if he does not report sex crimes to church authorities, although the canon law foresees no punishment for failing to report suspected crimes to police.

Ever since the 1983 code first was issued, lawyers and bishops have complained it was inadequate for dealing with the sexual abuse of minors since it required time-consuming trials. Victims and their advocates, meanwhile, argued the code left too much discretion in the hands of bishops who had an interest in covering up for their priests.

The Vatican issued piecemeal changes over the years to address problems and loopholes, most significantly requiring all cases to be sent to the Holy See for review and allowing for a more streamlined administrative process to defrock a priest if the evidence against him was overwhelming.

More recently, Francis passed new laws to punish bishops and religious superiors who failed to protect their flocks. The new criminal code incorporates those changes and goes beyond them, while also recognizing accused priests are presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

The Vatican has long considered any sexual relations between a priest and an adult as sinful but consensual, believing that adults are able to offer or refuse consent purely by the nature of their age. But amid the #MeToo movement and scandals of seminarians and nuns being sexually abused by their superiors, the Vatican has come to realize that adults can be victimized, if there is a power imbalance in the relationship.

That dynamic was most clearly recognized in the scandal over ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the former archbishop of Washington. Even though the Vatican knew for years he slept with his seminarians, McCarrick was only put on trial after someone came forward saying McCarrick had abused him as a youth.

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Francis eventually defrocked McCarrick in 2019.

According to the new law, priests who engage in sexual acts with anyone — not just a minor or someone who lacks the use of reason — can be defrocked if they used “force, threats or abuse of his authority” to engage in sexual acts. Previously the Vatican only considered it a crime if the priest used force or threats, and lumped the provision alongside sexual abuse of a minor.

Monsignor Juan Ignacio Arrieta, secretary of the Vatican’s legal office, said the new version would cover any rank-and-file member of the church who is a victim of a priest who abused his authority.

That provision is contained in a section detailing violations of the priest’s obligation to remain celibate. Another section of the law concerns priestly crimes against the dignity of others, including sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults.

The law doesn’t explicitly define which adults are covered, saying only an adult who “habitually has an imperfect use of reason” or for “whom the law recognizes equal protection.” Arrieta said the Vatican chose not to define precisely who is covered but noted that the Vatican previously defined vulnerable adults as those who even occasionally are unable to understand or consent because of a physical or mental deficiency or are deprived of their personal liberty.

The Rev. Davide Cito, a canon lawyer at the Pontifical Holy Cross University, said the broadness of the law “allows it to protect many people” who might not necessarily fall under the strict definition of “vulnerable” but are nevertheless deserving of protection.

In a novelty aimed at addressing sex crimes committed by laypeople who hold church offices, such as the founders of lay religious movements or even parish accountants and administrators, the new law says laypeople can be punished if they abuse their authority to engage in sexual or financial crimes.

Since these laypeople can’t be defrocked, penalties include losing their jobs, paying fines or being removed from their communities.

But Kurt Martens, a canon lawyer and professor at Catholic University of America, wondered how the church would enforce the payment of fines, suggesting the penalty might be an example of “wishful thinking” on the Vatican’s part.

“You can have the most perfect legislation and the lousiest enforcement,” Martens said in a phone interview. “Unlike civil authorities, what is the power of the church to enforce penalties she ultimately chooses to enforce?”

The need for such a lay-focused provision was made clear in the scandal involving Luis Figari, the lay founder of the Peru-based Sodalitium Christianae Vitae, a conservative movement that has 20,000 members and chapters throughout South America and the U.S.

An independent investigation concluded Figari was a paranoid narcissist obsessed with sex and watching his underlings endure pain and humiliation. But the Vatican and local church dithered for years on how to sanction him since he wasn’t a priest and couldn’t be defrocked - the worst penalty foreseen for sexual abusers.

Ultimately the Vatican decided to remove him from Peru and isolate him from the community.

## WHO grants emergency approval to 2nd Chinese COVID vaccine

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organization has issued an emergency use listing for the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinovac for adults 18 and over, the second such authorization it has granted to a Chinese company.

In a statement Tuesday, the U.N. health agency said data submitted to its experts showed that two doses of the vaccine prevented people from getting symptoms of COVID-19 in about half of those who got the vaccine. WHO said there were few older adults enrolled in the research, so it could not estimate how effective the vaccine was in people over 60.

“Nevertheless, WHO is not recommending an upper age limit for the vaccine,” the agency said, adding that data collected from Sinovac’s use in other countries “suggest the vaccine is likely to have a protective effect in older persons.”

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In April, a study published by a team of scientists in Brazil confirmed a previously reported efficacy rate of over 50% for Sinovac. A real-world study in Chile in April found an efficacy rate of 67%.

Last month, WHO gave the green light to the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinopharm. It has also licensed vaccines developed by Pfizer-BioNTech, AstraZeneca, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson.

WHO's authorization means the vaccine can be bought by donors and other U.N. agencies for use in poorer countries, including in the U.N.-backed initiative to distribute COVID-19 vaccines globally known as COVAX. The effort has been slowed considerably after its biggest supplier in India said it would not be able to provide any more vaccines until the end of the year due to the latest surge of new infections now ravaging India.

To date, there is no confirmed deal for Sinovac doses with COVAX.

In May, Europe's drug regulator began an expedited review process for the Sinovac vaccine, but it's unclear when a decision might be made about its possible authorization for the 27-nation bloc.

Hundreds of millions of Chinese vaccines have already been delivered to dozens of countries around the world through bilateral deals, as many nations scrambled to secure supplies after rich countries reserved the vast majority of supplies from Western pharmaceutical makers.

While China has five vaccine shots in use, the majority of its exports abroad come from two companies: Sinopharm and Sinovac. The Chinese vaccines are "inactivated" vaccines, made with killed coronavirus.

Most other COVID-19 vaccines being used around the world, particularly in the West, are made with newer technologies that instead target the "spike" protein that coats the surface of the coronavirus.

## Dems walk, stop Texas GOP's sweeping voting restrictions

By PAUL J. WEBER and ACACIA CORONADO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas Democrats pulled off a dramatic, last-ditch walkout in the state House of Representatives on Sunday night to block passage of one of the most restrictive voting bills in the U.S., leaving Republicans with no choice but to abandon a midnight deadline and declare the legislative session essentially over.

The revolt is one of Democrats' biggest protests to date against GOP efforts nationwide to impose stricter election laws, and they used the spotlight to urge President Joe Biden to act on voting rights.

But the victory may be fleeting: Republican Gov. Greg Abbott, who had declared new voting laws a priority in Texas, quickly announced he would order a special session to finish the job. He called the failure of the bill "deeply disappointing" but did not say when he would drag lawmakers back to work.

"We've said for so many years that we want more people to participate in our democracy. And it just seems that's not the case," Democratic state Rep. Carl Sherman said.

One by one, Democrats left the House chamber until there was no longer the 100-member quorum needed to pass Senate Bill 7, which would have reduced polling hours, empowered poll watchers and scaled back ways to vote in Texas, which already has some of the nation's strictest voting laws.

They gathered later outside a Black church, driving home their anger over a last-minute change to the Texas bill that would have prohibited Sunday voting before 1 p.m., when many Black worshippers go to the polls. Democrats said they did not go into the House vote intending to break quorum, but instead became fed-up after Republicans repeatedly refused to take their questions while racing to pass the bill.

It was a stunning turnabout from just 24 hours earlier, when the bill seemed all but guaranteed to reach Abbott's desk. The Texas Senate had signed off before sunrise earlier Sunday after Republicans, who hold an 18-13 majority in the chamber, used a bare-knuckle procedural move to suspend the rules and take up the measure in the middle of the night.

But as the day wore on in the House, the GOP's chances wobbled. State Rep. Chris Turner, the Democratic House leader, said he sent a text message to members of his caucus at 10:35 p.m. telling them to leave the chamber. But by that point, the exodus was already well underway.

"We knew today, with the eyes of the nation watching actions in Austin, that we needed to send a message, and that message is very, very clear: Mr. President, we need a national response to federal voting rights," Democratic state Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer said.

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Republicans showed restraint in criticizing Democrats for the move.

"I am disappointed that some members decided to break quorum," said Republican state Rep. Briscoe Cain, who carried the bill in the House. "We all know what that meant. I understand why they were doing it, but we all took an oath to Texans that we would be here to do our jobs."

Texas is the last big battleground in Republicans' campaign to tighten voting laws, driven by former President Donald Trump's false claims that the 2020 election was stolen from him. Georgia and Florida have also passed new voting restrictions, and Biden on Saturday had unfavorably compared Texas' bill to election changes in those states as "an assault on democracy."

Under revisions during closed-door negotiations, Republicans added language to the 67-page measure that could have made it easier for a judge to overturn an election. The bill would have also eliminated drive-thru voting and 24-hour polling centers, both of which Harris County introduced last year. Houston is in Harris County, the state's largest Democratic stronghold.

Major corporations joined the backlash, including Texas-based American Airlines and Dell, warning that the efforts could harm democracy and the economic climate. But Republicans shrugged off their objections, and in some cases, ripped business leaders for speaking out. By the time the Texas bill was poised to pass over the Memorial Day weekend, the opposition from businesses had grown faint.

Since Trump's defeat, at least 14 states have enacted more restrictive voting laws, according to the New York-based Brennan Center for Justice. It has counted nearly 400 bills filed this year nationwide that would restrict voting.

It was not the first time Texas Democrats — who have been out of power in the state Capitol for decades — have been able to block contentious legislation despite being outnumbered.

They twice broke quorum in 2003 to stop Republican efforts to redraw voting maps, at one point leaving the state for Oklahoma. A decade later, former state Sen. Wendy Davis ran out the clock on a sweeping anti-abortion bill with a filibuster that lasted more than 11 hours, propelling her to a failed run for governor.

But in each instance, Republicans ultimately prevailed.

"We may have won the war tonight but the battle is not over," Democratic state Rep. Nicole Collier said. "We will continue to fight and speak out against those measures that attempt to silence our voices."

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, June 2, the 153rd day of 2021. There are 212 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 2, 1979, Pope John Paul II arrived in his native Poland on the first visit by a pope to a Communist country.

On this date:

In 1897, Mark Twain was quoted by the New York Journal as saying from London that "the report of my death was an exaggeration." (Twain was responding to a report in the New York Herald that he was "grievously ill" and "possibly dying.")

In 1924, Congress passed, and President Calvin Coolidge signed, a measure guaranteeing full American citizenship for all Native Americans born within U.S. territorial limits.

In 1941, baseball's "Iron Horse," Lou Gehrig, died in New York of a degenerative disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis; he was 37.

In 1953, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place in London's Westminster Abbey, 16 months after the death of her father, King George VI.

In 1962, Soviet forces opened fire on striking workers in the Russian city of Novocherkassk; a retired general in 1989 put the death toll at 22 to 24.

In 1966, U.S. space probe Surveyor 1 landed on the moon and began transmitting detailed photographs of the lunar surface.



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In 1987, President Ronald Reagan announced he was nominating economist Alan Greenspan to succeed Paul Volcker as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

In 1995, a U.S. Air Force F-16C was shot down by a Bosnian Serb surface-to-air missile while on a NATO air patrol in northern Bosnia; the pilot, Capt. Scott F. O'Grady, was rescued by U.S. Marines six days later.

In 1997, Timothy McVeigh was convicted of murder and conspiracy in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people. (McVeigh was executed in June 2001.)

In 1999, South Africans went to the polls in their second post-apartheid election, giving the African National Congress a decisive victory; retiring president Nelson Mandela was succeeded by Thabo Mbeki (TAH'-boh um-BEH'-kee).

In 2008, Bo Diddley, 79, a founding father of rock 'n' roll, died in Archer, Florida, at age 79.

In 2009, Scott Roeder (ROH'-dur), an anti-abortion activist, was charged with first-degree murder in the shooting death of late-term abortion provider Dr. George Tiller in Wichita, Kansas. (Roeder was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole for 50 years.)

Ten years ago: Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney announced his bid for the Republican presidential nomination during an appearance in New Hampshire. A judge in Placerville, California, sentenced serial sex offender Phillip Garrido to life in prison for kidnapping and raping Jaycee Dugard; Garrido's wife, Nancy, received a decades-long sentence.

Five years ago: House Speaker Paul Ryan endorsed Donald Trump's bid for president, telling The Associated Press his goal was to make sure the GOP was "at full strength in the fall." President Barack Obama, speaking at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado, implored the next generation of U.S. military leaders not to give in to isolationism or pull back from U.S. leadership in the world, drawing a contrast with a foreign policy vision laid out by Donald Trump. Autopsy results showed superstar musician Prince died of an accidental overdose of fentanyl, a powerful opioid painkiller.

One year ago: Defying curfews, protesters streamed back into the nation's streets, hours after President Donald Trump urged governors to put down the violence set off by the death of George Floyd. Police said four officers were hit by gunfire after protests in St. Louis that began peacefully became violent. The bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington sharply criticized Trump for staging a visit to St. John's Church across from the White House after authorities had cleared the area of peaceful protesters. Mayors and governors from both parties rejected Trump's threat to use the military against protesters. Outrage over George Floyd's death spread around the world; tear gas choked Paris as riot police faced off with protesters setting fires. Six Atlanta police officers were charged after video showed police pulling two young people from a car and shooting them with stun guns. Trump said he was seeking a new state to host the Republican National Convention after North Carolina refused to guarantee that the event could be held in Charlotte without coronavirus restrictions. (Delegates would meet in Charlotte to nominate Trump for reelection, but he delivered his acceptance speech from the White House lawn.) Nine states and the District of Columbia voted in the largest slate of presidential primaries in almost three months; the vote count would confirm that Joe Biden had clinched the Democratic nomination. Basketball Hall of Famer Wes Unseld died at 74.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-singer Sally Kellerman is 84. Actor Ron Ely (EE'-lee) is 83. Filmmaker and movie historian Kevin Brownlow is 83. Actor Stacy Keach is 80. Rock musician Charlie Watts is 80. Actor Charles Haid is 78. R&B singer Chubby Tavares (Tavares) is 77. Movie director Lasse (LAH'-suh) Hallstrom is 75. Actor Jerry Mathers is 73. Actor Joanna Gleason is 71. NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman is 69. Actor Dennis Haysbert is 67. Comedian Dana Carvey is 66. Actor Gary Grimes is 66. Pop musician Michael Steele is 66. Rock singer Tony Hadley (Spandau Ballet) is 61. Actor Liam Cunningham is 60. Actor Navid Negahban is 57. Singer Merrill Bainbridge is 53. TV personality-producer Andy Cohen ("The Real Housewives" TV franchise) is 53. Rapper B-Real (Cypress Hill) is 51. Actor Paula Cale is 51. Actor Anthony Montgomery is 50. Actor-comedian Wayne Brady is 49. Actor Wentworth Miller is 49. Rock musician Tim Rice-Oxley (Keane) is 45. Actor Zachary Quinto is 44. Actor Dominic Cooper is 43. Actor Nikki Cox is 43. Actor Justin Long is 43. Actor Deon Richmond is 43. Actor Morena Baccarin is 42. R&B singer Irish Grinstead (702) is 41. Rock musician Fabrizio Moretti (The Strokes) is 41. Olympic gold medal soccer player Abby Wambach

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is 41. Singer-songwriter ZZ Ward is 35. Rapper/actor Awkwafina is 33. Actor Brittany Curran is 31. Actor Sterling Beaumon is 26.