

# Groton Daily Independent

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**City employee Branden Abeln runs the skidsteer as he removed the overgrowth in front of the city park sign. See the before and after photos on the next page.**

The Legion games for Monday with Brookings have been postponed.

### **Schedule for June 14 (Confirmed)**

T-Ball Scrimmage 5:00 Nelson field  
U12 @ Aberdeen Hannigan 5:30 (2) @ Manor Park  
U14 SB vs Oakes 6:00 (2) Nelson Field  
U8, 10, 12 SB vs Mellette @ 6,7,8 Falk Field



### **OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton**

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

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**There is a sign behind all of that overgrowth at the city park. The photo above is the before photo and the photo below is after wards. There is more work to be done on the sign as the posts will be painted and the sign stained.**



## Groton Jr Legion Grabs Lead In Fifth Inning For Victory Over Smittys Jr Legion B

Groton Jr Legion took the lead late and defeated Smittys Jr Legion B 11-10 on Friday. The game was tied at ten with Groton Jr Legion batting in the top of the fifth when Kaleb H singled on a 2-0 count, scoring one run.

Bats blistered as Groton Jr Legion collected three hits and Smittys Jr Legion B tallied 13 in the high-scoring game.

Smittys Jr Legion B captured the lead in the first inning. #7 drove in one when #7 singled.

After Groton Jr Legion scored one run in the top of the second, Smittys Jr Legion B answered with one of their own. Smittys Jr Legion B then answered when #20 singled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run.

Smittys Jr Legion B scored five runs in the third inning. The big inning for Smittys Jr Legion B came thanks to singles by #19 and #6 and a double by #12.

Braden A got the win for Groton Jr Legion. The lefty lasted one inning, allowing one hit and zero runs while striking out two and walking zero. Jordan B threw one and two-thirds innings in relief out of the bullpen.

#5 took the loss for Smittys Jr Legion B. The hurler surrendered two runs on two hits over one inning, striking out one and walking zero.

Dillon A started the game for Groton Jr Legion. The righthander went two and a third innings, allowing ten runs on 12 hits, striking out two and walking one

Kaleb went 2-for-4 at the plate to lead Groton Jr Legion in hits. Tate L led Groton Jr Legion with five stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with 18 stolen bases.

Smittys Jr Legion B totaled 13 hits. #15, #6, #19, #3, and #20 all collected multiple hits for Smittys Jr Legion B.

## Groton Jr Legion Defeats Smittys Jr Legion B Despite Allowing 4-Run Inning

Groton Jr Legion claimed a 19-5 victory on Friday, despite a big push by Smittys Jr Legion B in the third inning. The big inning for Smittys Jr Legion B came thanks to a groundout by Aiden H and an error on a ball put in play by Gavyn J.

Groton Jr Legion got things started in the first inning when an error scored one run for Groton Jr Legion.

Groton Jr Legion notched seven runs in the fourth inning. Groton Jr Legion offense in the inning was led by Andrew M, Kaleb H, Braden A, Cade L, and Cole S, all driving in runs in the frame.

Braden was credited with the victory for Groton Jr Legion. The southpaw surrendered five runs on four hits over four innings, striking out seven.

#12 took the loss for Smittys Jr Legion B. undefined went two innings, allowing nine runs on four hits.

#3 started the game for Smittys Jr Legion B. The pitcher surrendered nine runs on eight hits over two innings

Groton Jr Legion collected 12 hits. Caleb H and Andrew each collected multiple hits for Groton Jr Legion. Caleb went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Jr Legion in hits.

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# Groton Transit

## FUNDRAISER

**Thursday, June 17, 2021**  
**4 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

**Due to the heat, the event  
has been moved to the  
Groton Community Center**

*Please join us and help  
support Groton Transit!*

**FREE WILL OFFERING!**

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



Day shift  
and night  
shift  
assemblers!

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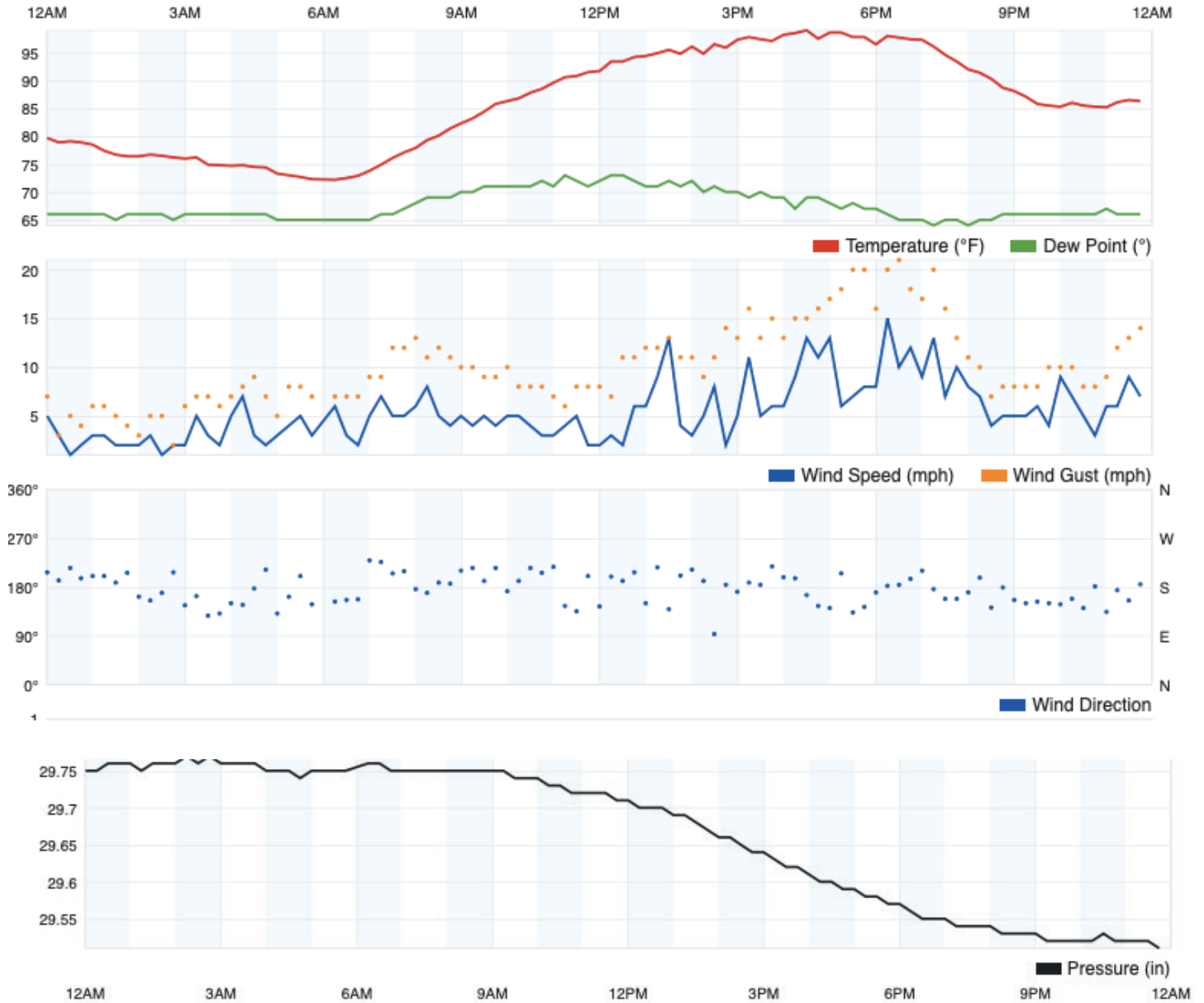
**Britton**



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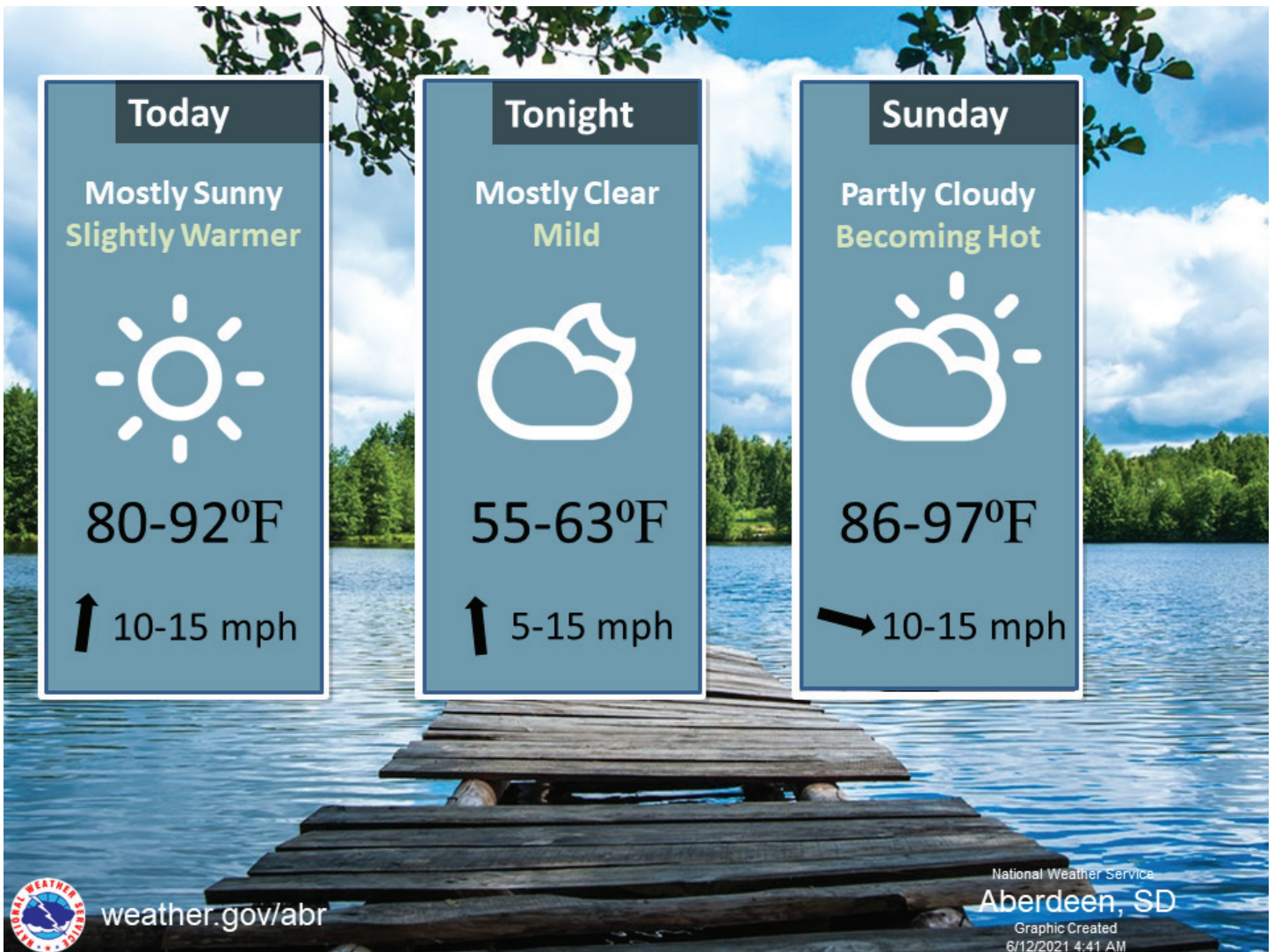
## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
				
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Hot	Mostly Clear	Hot
High: 88 °F	Low: 60 °F	High: 94 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 90 °F



**Today**  
Mostly Sunny  
Slightly Warmer  
  
80-92°F  
↑ 10-15 mph

**Tonight**  
Mostly Clear  
Mild  
  
55-63°F  
↑ 5-15 mph

**Sunday**  
Partly Cloudy  
Becoming Hot  
  
86-97°F  
↘ 10-15 mph

 weather.gov/abr  
National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD  
Graphic Created  
6/12/2021 4:41 AM

Pleasant weather conditions are expected to kick off this weekend. Mostly sunny skies will be the rule the next couple of days as temperatures begin to heat up once again by the end of the weekend. Mostly dry conditions will also persist, although there's an ever so slight chance for a late day storm to pop up across southwest and south-central South Dakota on Sunday.

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## Today in Weather History

June 12, 1924: A tornado moved southeast from the southwestern edge of Lake Kampeska, passing southwest of Watertown. Two barns were destroyed, and 20 smaller farm buildings were heavily damaged. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength.

June 12, 1983: Lightning struck and killed two cows near Miller in Hand County. Lightning also hit a home six miles north of Aberdeen, breaking a ceramic statue, and blow out light bulbs. Another home in Aberdeen was struck by lightning, rupturing a gas line and starting the house on fire. Also, heavy rains up to seven inches fall around the area. Some storm total rainfall amounts include; 2.00 inches at 2NW of Stephan; 2.40 inches in Miller; 3.03 at 4 miles west of Mellette; and 6.30 inches in Orient.

June 12, 1994: In Hand County, a thunderstorm caused an estimated 3 million dollars in crop damage. Hail, the largest being baseball size, was reported in drifts of three to four feet high. About 70 thousand acres of cropland and pastures were destroyed. Pheasants, ducks were killed by the hail and many cattle injured. Many windows were broken in homes, holes were punched in mobile homes, damaged occurred to contents of dwellings from hail which entered through windows, and many vehicles were extensively damaged.

June 12, 2013: A line of thunderstorms moving northeast across the region brought damaging wind gusts from 60 to 80 mph to parts of central and northeastern South Dakota. Many branches along with several trees were downed. Some buildings were also damaged with a couple of buildings destroyed. An estimated eighty mph wind destroyed a cabin on the east shore of the Missouri River and north-northwest of Pierre. A hundred foot by seventy-five-foot storage building was flattened south of Doland in Spink County. Tractors and planters and other equipment in the building were damaged.

1915: An estimated F4 tornado moved northeast from northwest of Waterville, Iowa crossing the Mississippi River two miles south of Ferryville, Wisconsin. A man and his daughter were killed in one of three homes that were obliterated southwest of "Heytman," a small railroad station on the Mississippi River. 60 buildings and eight homes were destroyed in Wisconsin. This tornado caused approximately \$200,000 in damage. In addition to this tornado, another estimated F4 tornado moved northeast across Fayette and Clayton Counties in northeast Iowa. One farm was devastated, the house and barn leveled. Heavy machinery was thrown 300 yards. Clothing was carried two miles.

1948: The Columbia River Basin flood peaked on this date in the Northwest. The flood produced the highest water level in the basin since the flood there in 1894. The damage estimate for the 1948 flood was \$101 million, and 75 lives were lost.

1881 - Severe thunderstorms spawned more than half a dozen tornadoes in the Lower Missouri Valley. Five of the tornadoes touched down near Saint Joseph MO. In south central Kansas a tornado nearly wiped out the town of Floral. Hail and high winds struck Iowa and southern Minnesota. In Minnesota, Blue Earth City reported five inches of rain in one hour. (David Ludlum)

1947 - A heavy wet snow blanketed much of southern and central Wyoming, and gave many places their heaviest and latest snow of record. Totals included 18.4 inches at Lander, 8.7 inches at Cheyenne, and 4.5 inches at Casper. (11th-12th) (The Weather Channel)

1969 - Record late season snows covered parts of Montana. Five inches was reported at Great Falls and east of Broadus. Billings, MT, tied their June record with lows of 32 degrees on the 12th and the 13th. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - The state of Utah was besieged by floods and mudslides. Streets in downtown Salt Lake City were sandbagged and turned into rivers of relief. The town of Thistle was completely inundated as a mudslide made a natural dam. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced softball size hail around Fremont and Ames, and 3.5 inches of rain in less than one hour. Four and a half inches in less than an hour caused flooding around Ithica, NE. A tornado destroyed a mobile home near Broken Bow, NE, injuring both occupants. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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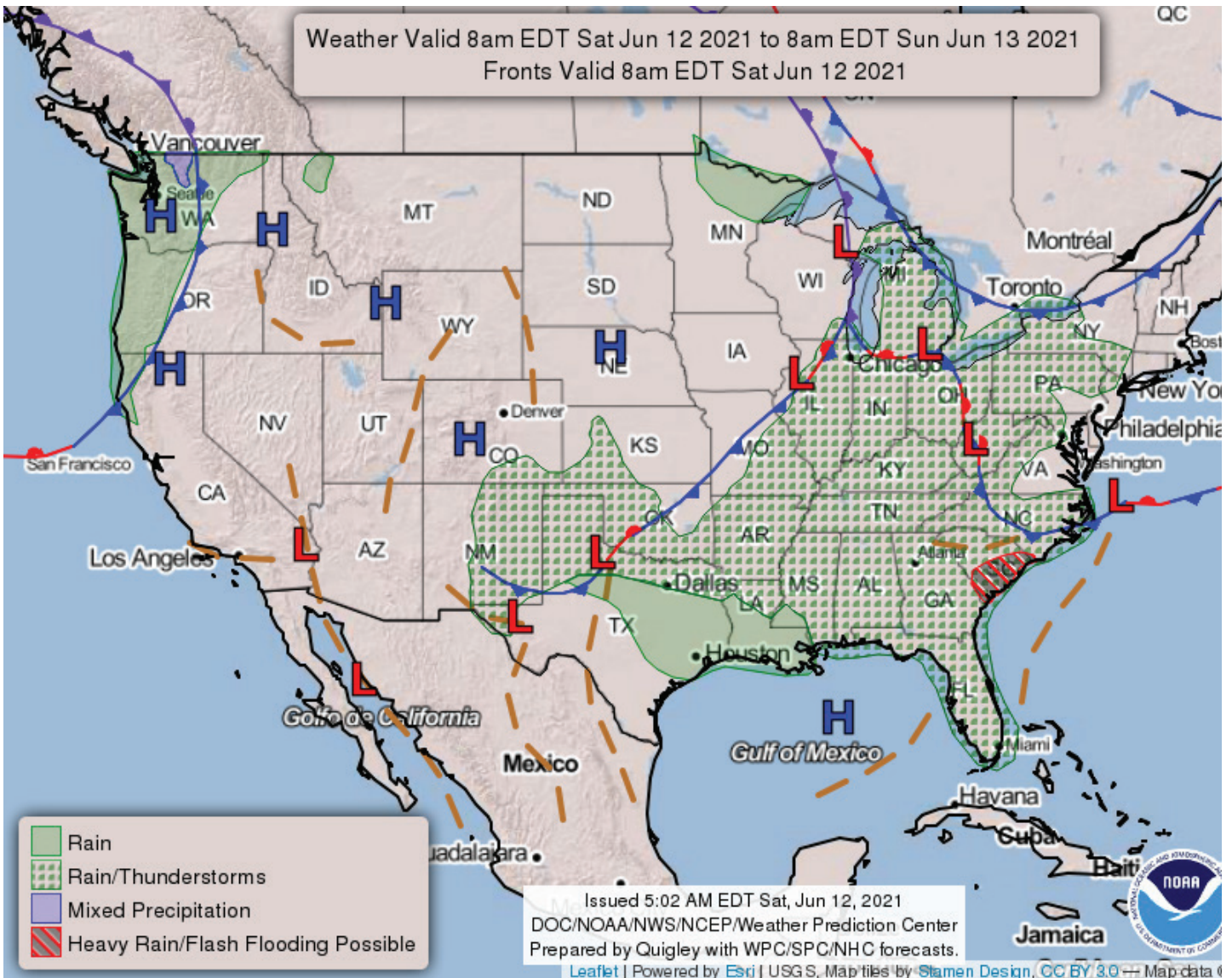
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 86.4 °F**  
**Low Temp: 62.9 °F**  
**Wind: 29 mph**  
**Precip: 00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 103° in 1956**  
**Record Low: 37° in 2012**  
**Average High: 80°F**  
**Average Low: 54°F**  
**Average Precip in June.: 1.27**  
**Precip to date in June.: 0.53**  
**Average Precip to date: 8.52**  
**Precip Year to Date: 4.50**  
**Sunset Tonight: 9:23 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45 a.m.**



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## PROMISES! PROMISES!

He spent many years living alone not having the necessities of life. One day in his despair he looked at the top shelf of an old bookcase cluttered with pictures and the mementos of his life. As his eyes passed from item to item, he noticed his mother's Bible that he had not touched since her death.

Slowly, he opened the well-worn Book and very carefully began to leaf through its pages. As he made his way through Genesis, he found \$1,000.00. He did the same with Exodus and found another \$1,000.00. His excitement grew as he went from book to book and found \$1,000.00 in each one of them.

Imagine having \$66,000 within arm's reach and not even knowing it was there, waiting to be discovered. We may fault the old man for living in poverty when it was unnecessary, and riches were available. We might say, "How sad! Why didn't he look sooner?"

But, sadder than the fact that the money was in his mother's Bible waiting for him to discover is the fact that there are 3,573 promises in the Bible waiting for us to discover and claim. Our good and gracious God placed them there for each of us. Yet, most of us do not know where to find any of them, and they go unclaimed.

The Psalmist said, "My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promises preserve my life." Each promise is a benefit God has placed in His Word waiting for us to claim. Jesus addressed this same issue when He said, "For everyone who asks receives." Don't go without!

Prayer: The best things in life, Father, can be ours for the asking. May we understand Your promises so that we may claim what is ours through Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely. Psalm 63:8

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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 **Postponed to Aug. 28th:** 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  
08/28/2021 Lions Club Crazy Golf Fest 9am 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

### Some Rapid City-area residents say taxes are hard to swallow

By ABBY WARGO Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Patti Kowalchuk didn't pay much attention to her property taxes until recently. Now, the 74-year-old widow and grandmother wonders if she will be taxed out of her west Rapid City home.

"I don't know what happened," Kowalchuk told the Journal in April. "I'm very busy with my grandchildren; I have seven. Life interests and demands change ... to spend a few hours looking (property tax information) up is not my cup of tea these days."

Her late husband served in the Air Force, so she spent much of her adult life moving around the world, raising a family, and working as a teacher. She moved to Rapid City in 2014 from Virginia to be closer to her son and his family.

Last year, she purchased her son's home near Canyon Lake and soon realized that her property taxes would be increasing by more than \$400 this year.

"When I first saw the amount of the tax compared to other states I have lived, it was very shockingly high to me. I tried to find an exemption that I could qualify for. As far as I can find out, there is none. I panicked, knowing that it would not be long before I would no longer be able to afford to live in my own home due to the high taxes," Kowalchuk said.

In 2019, she paid \$3,240 in annual property taxes. In 2020, her taxes increased by 10.5% to \$3,582.

Kowalchuk is hardly alone when she worries that rising property taxes in Pennington County could push her out of her home, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Many local homeowners have seen increases in their property taxes over the past few years with property valuation increasing by an average of 5% to 6% over the past seven years in Pennington County, according to data from Rapid City Area Schools.

Fred Carl, who has lived in Rapid City since 1984, saw an 11.5% increase in his property taxes this year after the county's most recent assessment.

Six years ago, his property taxes increased by nearly 15%. In the years between, they have risen anywhere from 3% to 6%. Carl lives in the Whispering Pines subdivision in west Rapid City with his wife and is retired.

"To me, that's substantial increases. Right now, I'm paying almost \$4,567 a year," he said. "Rapid City and Pennington County have always been famous for their property tax rates. I get it, they've got to have money to operate. But my biggest gripe is the significant percent changes from year to year."

Carl said while his increases have hovered around 7% each year, some of his neighbors have seen increases as high as 25%.

Steve Hata, a semi-retired physician, has lived near West Boulevard since 1995.

His property taxes started increasing five years ago and have been soaring ever since, he said. Five years ago, his house was valued at \$180,000. The most recent assessment valued it at \$276,600. His property taxes now approach \$4,000 a year.

Chris Johnson bought his house in 1995 and now pays \$5,963 annually in property taxes.

In 2010, he paid \$4,277. The year after he bought the house in 1996, his property taxes were \$2,682. Johnson said the increases are outpacing his household's income.

"We don't want to 'get our money out' of our house. We want to continue to live here into retirement," he said. "With property tax pushing past \$6,000 and no end in sight, a fixed income will be progressively less able to handle these charges."

Pat Hahn is relying on retirement income to survive after the value of the house she built with her husband doubled. Hahn paid \$6,052 in property taxes in 2017. This year, she owes \$6,465.

"I have eliminated every cost I can think of; I do no traveling, no shopping, no belonging to the swim

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center or anything else, nothing except for necessities. I feel the federal, state and local governments have failed me," Hahn said.

Property taxes alone are not responsible for the squeeze some homeowners are feeling. Higher costs for food, energy and gasoline contribute as well as the millage rate, or the tax rate, that helps determine the property tax rates for payments to the city, county and school district after they approve their budgets.

Hata said he and his wife spend twice as much on groceries compared to five years ago. He is relying primarily on investment income to cover his expenses until he can collect Social Security, but even then he said he will have to continue to cash out his portfolio to cover living expenses.

Kowalchuk said she tries to live within her means — she does not have cable or any kind of television subscription, her car is paid off, and her son pays her phone bill.

"To me, it's a big deal to buy a coffee and a bagel. That's the way it is, because of the expenses," she said. "When property taxes start going up at \$200ish, that's a lot to a person in my situation."

As costs continue to rise, homeowners fear the situation will necessitate leaving their homes. Kowalchuk said if nothing changes, she will not be able to afford a single-family dwelling in the area.

Kowalchuk said she is fortunate — her son lives nearby and if it became necessary she could move in with his family. She said it is not ideal for her or them, but she knows others who have no such fallback.

She said a downside of not being able to afford a home that someone has lived in for a long time will ultimately burden the city's infrastructure.

"That is a major life change like that is likely to bring major depression, illness, and cause more people to draw on food banks and other mutual aid," Kowalchuk said.

High property taxes will also affect the city's attractiveness to retired people, who are critical to any economy, she said.

"(Rapid City) is going to price itself out of being a good retirement area. Retired people have more loyalty to local businesses, and they can spend time and resources on amenities," Kowalchuk said.

Carl said the increases won't force them out of their home, but it could be a different story for his in-laws, who are in their 80s and whose house acts as their savings account.

Last year when the Rapid City Area Schools Board of Education proposed a new bond measure to pay for new schools, which if passed would have resulted in higher property taxes, Carl's in-laws were almost forced to put their house on the market, he said.

Hata's wife also owns a property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where they are planning to move after he finishes his business in Rapid City. The Albuquerque property has a market value of around \$450,000 and they pay around \$3,000 annually in property taxes.

In addition, Hata owns property in Hawaii along with his brother. That house is valued at \$2 million but property taxes remain around \$3,000 a year. In both cases, the couple's properties are worth more than their Rapid City home but property taxes are lower.

South Dakota is one of nine states that does not have a state income tax.

The state ranks 43rd in the nation for overall tax burden, according to data from WalletHub, but adjusted for property taxes alone, the state's tax burden jumps to 19th. Adjusted for sales tax, South Dakota ranks ninth.

State Sen. Helene Duhamel, a Republican from Rapid City, said discussions on other sources of revenue are continual, but the state has resisted an income tax for good reasons.

"In South Dakota, we have resisted an income tax in order to continue to keep the tax burden on our citizens at the lowest possible level. That's why South Dakota ranks so highly nationally for lowest tax burden per capita," Duhamel said.

Carl said even if state government changed its tax policies, it's doubtful that taxpayers would get much relief.

"It's never going to stop. Costs continue to go up and you hope your property value does too, but there's got to be some correction in how this is done," he said. "I've thought about adding an income tax, but every story I've heard is consistent — when laws change or taxes are imposed to try to take away pressure on property owners, it doesn't change."

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Hata and others, however, fear dire consequences unless changes are made by the state Legislature. "How is this sustainable in the long run?" Hata asked. "It's coming to a crisis, and all of it is a symptom of poor governance. I'm a conservative, but I'm a responsible conservative. I want to see our tax dollars at work. If you're going to tax us to death, at least show us the benefits."

Property owners interviewed for this story said if current taxing trends continue many longtime residents will have no choice but to sell their homes and move elsewhere.

"For people moving into the area with a lot of money, I guess this is fine, but for people who have been here forever, this is going to push them right out of their homes," Carl said. "That's the flip side of bringing everybody to South Dakota."

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:

Mega Millions

04-43-56-63-68, Mega Ball: 13, Megaplier: 4

(four, forty-three, fifty-six, sixty-three, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: thirteen; Megaplier: four)

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$31 million

## Dakota Access foes seek environmental review updates from US

BY JAMES MacPHERSON Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Dakota Access oil pipeline opponents asked a judge Friday to require the pipeline company and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide detailed monthly status reports while the federal government conducts an extensive environmental review of the project.

The request comes after U.S. District Judge James Boasberg ruled in May that the pipeline, which carries oil from North Dakota to a shipping point in Illinois, may continue operating while the Army Corps of Engineers conducts the review known as an environmental impact statement.

In court documents, attorneys for the pipeline company said Boasberg should not require the monthly reports and also renewed their longstanding request to have the case dismissed.

Boasberg issued his May ruling after attorneys for the pipeline's Texas-based owner, Energy Transfer, argued that shuttering the pipeline would be a major economic blow to several entities, including North Dakota, and the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, in the heart of the state's oil patch.

Earthjustice attorney Jan Hasselman, who represents the Standing Rock Sioux and other tribes, said a decision on whether to appeal that order could come later.

Attorneys for the Standing Rock Sioux and other tribes say the pipeline is operating illegally without a federal permit granting easement to cross beneath Lake Oahe, a Missouri River reservoir near the Standing Rock reservation that is maintained by the Corps. They said preventing financial loss should not come at the expense of the other tribes, "especially when the law has not been followed."

The Standing Rock Sioux, which more than four years ago sued the Corps for granting permits that led then-President Donald Trump to approve pipeline construction, draws its water from the Missouri River and says it fears pollution. The company has said the pipeline is safe.

The \$3.8 billion, 1,172-mile (1,886-kilometer) pipeline began operating in 2017, after being the subject of months of protests during its construction. Environmental groups, encouraged by some of President Joe Biden's recent moves on climate change and fossil fuels, were hoping he would step in and shut down the pipeline. But the Biden administration left it up to Boasberg.

Attorneys for the tribes on Friday also requested that Boasberg's court retain jurisdiction over the litigation until the environmental work is completed and a new easement is issued.

Boasberg ordered further environmental study in April 2020, after determining the Corps had not adequately considered how an oil spill under the Missouri River might affect Standing Rock's fishing and

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hunting rights, or whether it might disproportionately affect the tribal community.

## Lakota spiritual leader, activist Leonard Crow Dog dies

Chief Leonard Crow Dog, a renowned spiritual leader and Native American rights activist who fought for sovereignty, language preservation and religious freedom, has died at age 78.

Crow Dog, Sicangu Lakota Oyate, passed away June 6 at Crow Dog's Paradise on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota after a battle with cancer, Indian Country Today reported.

As a youth, Crow Dog learned about cultural traditions and ceremonies from his father and Lakota elders. He later became a spiritual leader for the American Indian Movement.

"He did not go to school. Instead his parents enlisted four medicine men to guide his education," Rosebud Sioux Tribe President Rodney Bordeaux said in a statement. "Throughout his life, Crow Dog learned from the University of the Universe, as he would say, and he shared his understanding of WoLakota with our Sicangu Oyate, the Oceti Sakowin, and Peoples of all Nations."

Crow Dog attended and spoke at countless rallies, marches and protests over the years. He also co-authored a book, "Crow Dog: Four Generations of Sioux Medicine Men," which tells the story of his ancestors and his life.

In 1972, Crow Dog took part in the Trail of Broken Treaties, which included the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' headquarters in Washington, D.C. He also participated in and was arrested after the 71-day occupation at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

He was incarcerated for two years, then returned home to hold sweat lodge and peyote ceremonies, Sundances and other spiritual activities. He revived Lakota traditions, including the Ghost Dance, and counseled many people during times of loss or hardship.

Crow Dog also lobbied for the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and Indian Self Determination Act, two laws that altered the relationship between Native Americans and the United States.

In 2016, he joined and held ceremonies with Native Americans from across the country who gathered near the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in the Dakotas to protest the Dakota Access pipeline.

"Crow Dog gave his life for the people through ceremony, songs, Sundance, political action and bold leadership," said Nick Tilsen, Oglala Lakota and president and CEO of NDN Collective, an Indigenous-led advocacy organization.

"This is a loss that hurts us all deeply," Tilsen said. "His legacy will be carried forward with what we all do with the things he taught us through his love for the people."

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe flew flags at half staff this week in Crow Dog's honor.

## Baltic mayoral race could be settled by drawing lots

BALTIC, S.D. (AP) — The next mayor of Baltic, South Dakota could be decided by the drawing of lots after the election officially ended in a tie.

Election officials from the southeastern South Dakota city, which has a population of just over 1,000, said their canvas of votes on Thursday confirmed that the two mayoral candidates — Deborah McIsaac and Tracy Peterson — were tied with 117 votes apiece. The Dell Rapids Tribune reported that if the election remains tied after a potential recount, state law calls for the election to be decided by "a drawing of lots."

The candidates have until the end of the day Thursday to initiate a recount. But if they don't request the recount or the vote count remains tied, City Administrator Rebecca Wulf would then meet with the candidates to decide the election in a game of chance.

"It's pretty incredible," Wulf said. "When they flipped the last vote over and it was a tie, I just sat on the ground and said 'you've got to be kidding me.'"

## Aberdeen preps for first LGBTQ pride events

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The city of Aberdeen is preparing for its first LGBTQ pride events on Saturday

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night.

The Aberdeen News reported Thursday that events will include live music and karaoke outside the Red Rooster Coffee House and a drag show at Slackers bar. The show is open to anyone 21 and older. About 10 performers from the Black Hills and Sioux City, Iowa, are signed up. Attendees will be asked to wear facemasks to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Organizer Megan Snow said it seems "silly" that Aberdeen, the third-largest city in North Dakota and a college town, has never celebrated LGBTQ pride in the past.

Snow spearheaded efforts to organize Pierre's first Pride Fest in July 2018.

## Man arrested after smashing cars with ax

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police in Sioux Falls have arrested a man after he allegedly smashed out the windows of two cars with an ax and threatened a teenager.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported Thursday that police got a call late Wednesday afternoon about a man outside an apartment complex with an ax.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens said the 34-year-old man used the three-foot ax to smash the window of a 1994 Ford Mustang and a 2018 Honda Civic. The man also threatened a 15-year-old boy who saw the incident.

Officers found the man and arrested him on suspicion of aggravated assault a short time after they arrived.

Clemens said the man knew somebody at the apartment complex but police weren't sure if he was involved in a dispute with that person. The cars the man vandalized didn't belong to his acquaintance in the complex and were apparently targeted randomly, he said.

No injuries were reported. The man caused \$6,000 in damage to the Mustang and \$1,500 to the Civic.

## Judge pauses loan forgiveness program for farmers of color

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A federal judge has halted a loan forgiveness program for farmers of color in response to a lawsuit alleging the program discriminates against white farmers.

U.S. District Judge William Griesbach in Milwaukee issued a temporary restraining order Thursday suspending the program for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

The program pays up to 120% of direct or guaranteed farm loan balances for Black, American Indian, Hispanic, Asian American or Pacific Islander farmers. President Joe Biden's administration created the loan forgiveness program as part of its COVID-19 pandemic relief plan.

Emily Newton, the lead attorney representing the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the lawsuit, didn't immediately respond to an email Friday seeking comment on the restraining order.

Minority farmers have maintained for decades that they have been unfairly denied farm loans and other government assistance. Federal agriculture officials in 1999 and 2010 settled lawsuits from Black farmers accusing the agency of discriminating against them.

Conservative law firm Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty filed suit in April arguing white farmers aren't eligible, amounting to a violation of their constitutional rights. The firm sued on behalf of 12 farmers from Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Missouri, Iowa, Arkansas, Oregon and Kentucky.

## Biden to urge G-7 leaders to call out, compete with China

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, AAMER MADHANI and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

CARBIS BAY, England (AP) — The United States plans to push democratic allies on Saturday to publicly call out China for forced labor practices as the Group of Seven leaders gather at a summit where they will also unveil an infrastructure plan meant to compete with Beijing's efforts in the developing world.

The provocative proposal is part of President Joe Biden's escalating campaign to get fellow democratic leaders to present a more unified front to compete economically with China in the century ahead, accord-



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ing to two senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the plans publicly.

The officials said Biden wanted G-7 leaders to speak out in a single voice against forced labor practices targeting Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities. Biden hopes the denunciation will be part of the joint communique released at the summit's end, but some European allies have been reluctant to so forcefully split with Beijing. It may not be clear until the three-day summit ends on Sunday whether the leaders will take that step.

The wealthy nations' leaders were all smiles Friday as their host, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, welcomed them to the summit on the freshly raked sand of Carbis Bay in southwest England for their first gathering since 2019.

Last year's gathering was canceled because of COVID-19, and recovery from the pandemic is dominating this year's discussions, with members of the wealthy democracies' club expected to commit to sharing at least 1 billion vaccine shots with struggling countries.

China also loomed large over the meeting on the craggy coast of Cornwall. Biden's proposed critique of China's labor practices was to be raised as the allies unveil an infrastructure proposal dubbed "Build Back Better for the World," a name echoing the American president's campaign slogan.

The plan calls for spending hundreds of billions of dollars in collaboration with the private sector. It's designed to compete with China's trillion-dollar "Belt and Road Initiative," which has launched a network of projects and maritime lanes that already snake around large portions of the world, primarily Asia and Africa. Critics say the projects often create massive debt and expose nations to undue influence by Beijing.

Britain also wants the world's democracies to become less reliant on economic giant China. The U.K. government says Saturday's discussions will tackle "how we can shape the global system to deliver for our people in support of our values," including by diversifying supply chains that currently heavily depend on China.

Not every European power has viewed China in as harsh a light as Biden, who has painted the rivalry with the techno-security state as the defining competition for the 21st century. But there are some signs that Europe is willing to put greater scrutiny on Beijing.

Weeks before Biden took office last year, the European Commission announced it had come to terms with Beijing on the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, a deal meant to provide Europe and China greater access to each other's markets. The Biden administration had hoped to have consultations on the pact.

But the deal has been put on hold, and the European Union in March announced sanctions targeting four Chinese officials involved with human rights abuses in Xinjiang. Beijing responded by imposing sanctions on several members of the European Parliament and other Europeans critical of the Chinese Communist Party.

Biden administration officials see the moment as an opportunity to take concrete action to speak out against China's reliance on forced labor as an "affront to human dignity."

While calling out China in the communique wouldn't create any immediate penalties for Beijing, one senior administration official said the action was meant to send a message that the G-7 was serious about defending human rights and working together to eradicate the use of forced labor.

An estimated 1 million people or more — most of them Uyghurs — have been confined in reeducation camps in China's western Xinjiang region in recent years, according to researchers. Chinese authorities have been accused of imposing forced labor, systematic forced birth control, torture and separating children from incarcerated parents.

Beijing rejects allegations that it is committing crimes.

The leaders of the G-7 — which also includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan — also hope the meeting at the seaside resort will energize the global economy.

Johnson on Friday opened three days of talks by warning that world leaders must not repeat errors of the past 18 months — or those made during the recovery from the 2008 global financial crisis. If not, he said the pandemic "risks being a lasting scar" that entrenched inequalities.

He said the G-7 will announce health measures aimed at reducing the chances of another pandemic.

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The "Carbis Bay Declaration" will aim for a 100-day goal to develop vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for future diseases and to bolster surveillance for new illnesses.

Johnson said the goal of the measures was "to make sure that never again will we be caught unawares."

Brexit will also cast a shadow on the summit Saturday, as Johnson meets separately with European leaders including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron amid tensions over Britain's implementation of U.K.-EU divorce terms.

Macron will also hold talks with Biden — a meeting between allies who recalibrated their relationship during the four years of President Donald Trump's "America first" foreign policy.

Macron's preference for multilateralism was out of step with Trump's isolationist tendencies. But the Trump era was often framed by Macron as a clarifying moment — one in which Europe had to step forward as America drifted away from alliances and toward Trumpism.

Biden ends the trip Wednesday with summit in Geneva with Russia's Vladimir Putin. The White House announced Saturday that the leaders will not hold a joint news conference after meeting, removing the opportunity for comparisons to the availability that followed Trump and Putin's 2018 Helsinki summit in which Trump sided with Moscow over his own intelligence agencies.

Aides have suggested that the U.S. did not want to elevate Putin further by having the two men appear together in such a format. Others have expressed concern that Putin could try to score points on Biden, 78, who will be in the final hours of a grueling eight-day European trip.

Putin, in an interview with NBC News, portions of which aired Friday, said the U.S.-Russia relationship had "deteriorated to its lowest point in recent years."

He added that while Trump was a "talented" and "colorful" person, Biden was a "career man" in politics, which has "some advantages, some disadvantages, but there will not be any impulse-based movements" by the U.S. president.

To cap the day Friday, Queen Elizabeth II — Britain's biggest global star — traveled from Windsor Castle near London for a reception with the G-7 leaders and their spouses at the Eden Project, a futuristic botanical garden housed inside domes that features the world's largest indoor rainforest.

Senior royals — including heir to the throne Prince Charles, his son Prince William and William's wife, Kate — joined the leaders for the reception and a dinner of roasted turbot, Cornish new potatoes and greens with wild garlic pesto, cooked by a local chef.

The choice of an ecologically themed venue was deliberate. Climate change is also a top issue on the agenda, and hundreds of protesters gathered in Cornwall to urge the leaders to act, some dressed as sea creatures, including jellyfish. Demonstrators deployed a barge off the coast with two large inflatable figures depicting Biden and Johnson on board.

## UK-EU Brexit spat over N Ireland clouds G7 leaders summit

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

FALMOUTH, England (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson held meetings with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday on the sidelines of a G-7 summit, as post-Brexit turbulence strains relations between Britain and the EU.

After Britain's top diplomat accused the EU of taking a "bloody-minded" approach to relations, Johnson also met the bloc's leaders, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel, at the Carbis Bay resort where G-7 leaders are gathering.

The two sides are locked in an escalating diplomatic feud over Northern Ireland, the only part of the U.K. that has a land border with the bloc. The EU is angry at British delay in implementing new checks on some goods coming into Northern Ireland from the rest of the U.K. required under the terms of Britain's divorce from the bloc. Britain says the checks are imposing a big burden on businesses and destabilizing Northern Ireland's hard-won peace.

The spat has drawn in U.S. President Joe Biden, who is concerned about the potential threat to Northern Ireland's peace accord.

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Von der Leyen tweeted after meeting Johnson that Northern Ireland peace was "paramount," and the binding Brexit agreement protected it.

"We want the best possible relations with the UK. Both sides must implement what we agreed on. There is complete EU unity on this," she said.

The EU is threatening legal action if the U.K. does not fully bring in the checks, which include a ban on chilled meats such as sausages from England, Scotland and Wales going to Northern Ireland starting next month.

It says Britain must fully implement the agreement, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol, that the two sides agreed and ratified.

Britain accuses the bloc of taking a rigid approach to the rules and urged it to be more flexible in order to avoid what has been dubbed a "sausage war." U.K. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Saturday that if the EU continued to take a "bloody-minded and purist" approach, Britain would have to act to protect "the integrity of the U.K."

Johnson's spokesman, Max Blain said the U.K. wants the protocol to work but that it needs "radical changes."

British officials say it's unlikely the issue will be solved during the G-7 summit, which ends Sunday. But Blain said the two sides had agreed to keep talking.

Johnson "wants the EU to work with him to find an urgent compromise," he said.

## The Latest: Biden will speak to media alone after Putin meet

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the Group of Seven nations meeting being held in England:

CARBIS BAY, England — The White House says President Joe Biden will hold a solo news conference after meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The two delegations will have a working session and smaller session as part of their meeting on Wednesday in the Swiss city of Geneva. But the White House says it is still finalizing the format of the meeting.

The White House says a news conference with only Biden is the appropriate format to communicate the topics discussed, areas of agreement and sources of significant concern.

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FALMOUTH, England — U.S. First Lady Jill Biden and Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, have written a joint article on the importance of early childhood education after their visit to a primary school on the sidelines of the G-7 summit in England.

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The two women met for the first time Friday at a school in Cornwall, southwestern England, where they visited 4 and 5-year-olds and spoke with experts on early childhood development.

In their article, published on the CNN website Saturday, they said the disruption of the pandemic has helped people focus on the things that matter most, and they have a joint belief that the future must include a "fundamental shift in how our countries approach the earliest years of life."

"If we care about how children perform at school, how they succeed in their careers when they are older, and about their lifelong mental and physical health, then we have to care about how we are nurturing their brains, their experiences and relationships in the early years before school," they wrote.

They said business leaders, among others, should give more support to the parents and caregivers in their workforces.

"If we want strong economies and strong societies, we need to make sure that those raising and caring for children get the support they need," they added.

Biden is a longtime English teacher who focuses on education, a passion she shares with Kate, a mother of three young children.

## **Saudi Arabia says hajj to be limited to 60,000 in kingdom**

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Saudi Arabia announced Saturday this year's hajj pilgrimage will be limited to no more than 60,000 people, all of them from within the kingdom, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The announcement by the kingdom comes after it ran an incredibly pared-down pilgrimage last year over the virus, but still allowed a small number of the faithful to take part in the annual ceremony.

A statement on the state-run Saudi Press Agency quoted the kingdom's Hajj and Umrah Ministry making the announcement. It said this year's hajj, which will begin in mid-July, will be limited to those ages 18 to 65.

Those taking part must be vaccinated as well, the ministry said.

"The kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is honored to host pilgrims every year, confirms that this arrangement comes out of its constant concern for the health, safety and security of pilgrims as well as the safety of their countries," the statement said.

In last year's hajj, as few as 1,000 people already residing in Saudi Arabia were selected to take part in the hajj. Two-thirds were foreign residents from among the 160 different nationalities that would have normally been represented at the hajj. One-third were Saudi security personnel and medical staff.

Each year, up to 2 million Muslims perform the hajj, a physically demanding and often costly pilgrimage that draws the faithful from around the world. The hajj, required of all able-bodied Muslims to perform once in their lifetime, is seen as a chance to wipe clean past sins and bring about greater humility and unity among Muslims.

The kingdom's Al Saud ruling family stakes its legitimacy in this oil-rich nation on overseeing and protecting the hajj sites. Ensuring the hajj happens has been a priority for them.

Disease outbreaks have always been a concern surrounding the hajj. Pilgrims fought off a malaria outbreak in 632, cholera in 1821 killed an estimated 20,000, and another cholera outbreak in 1865 killed 15,000 before spreading worldwide.

More recently, Saudi Arabia faced danger from a different coronavirus, one that causes the Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS. The kingdom increased its public health measures during the hajj in 2012 and 2013, urging the sick and the elderly not to take part.

In recent years, Saudi officials also instituted bans on pilgrims coming from countries affected by the Ebola virus.

Saudi Arabia had closed its borders for months to try and stop the spread of the coronavirus. Since the start of the pandemic, the kingdom has reported over 462,000 cases of the virus with 7,500 deaths. It has administered some 15.4 million doses of coronavirus vaccines, according to the World Health Organization.

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The kingdom is home to over 30 million people.

## China's wandering elephants on the move again

BEIJING (AP) — China's famed wandering elephants are on the move again, heading southwest while a male who broke from the herd is still keeping his distance.

The group left a wildlife reserve in the southwest of Yunnan province more than a year ago and has trekked 500 kilometers (300 miles) north to the outskirts of the provincial capital of Kunming.

As of Saturday, they were spotted in Shijie township in the city of Yuxi, more than 8 kilometers (5 miles) southwest of the Kunming suburb they had arrived at last week, according to state media reports. The lone male was 16 kilometers (10 miles) away, still on the outskirts of Kunming.

The direction of their travel could be a good sign, since authorities are hoping to lead them back to their original home in the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture southwest of Kunming.

Authorities have been attempting to keep a distance between them and local residents, while blocking roads into villages and seeking to lure them away with food drops. Despite that, the herd of 15 have raided farms, strolled down urban streets and foraged for snacks in villages and even a retirement home.

All of the animals are reported to be healthy and no person has been injured in encounters with them. Officials have issued strict orders not to gawk at them or seek to drive them off using firecrackers or other means. China's roughly 300 wild elephants enjoyed the highest level of protected status, on a par with the country's unofficial mascot, the panda bear.

However, extra precautions are being taken amid steady rainfall in the area and crowds of onlookers expected around the Dragon Boat festival on Monday. Additional emergency workers, vehicles and drones have been deployed to monitor the elephants' movements and protect local residents, the reports said. Some 2.5 tons of food were laid out for the animals on Friday.

It remains unclear why the elephants embarked on their trek, although Evan Sun, wildlife campaign manager with World Animal Protection, said possible reasons could include lack of food supply, a rise in the elephant population and, most importantly, loss of habitat.

"The increase of human-elephant conflicts reflects the urgency for a more strategic policy and plan to protect these endangered wild animals and their natural habitats," Sun wrote in an email.

"This also poses a great opportunity to educate the public about the challenges that wild animals face for survival and the need for better protection from a government, industry and society level," Sun wrote. "These animals belong in the wild. We need to keep a safe distance from them, which is good for us and the wild animals."

## Pandemic relapse spells trouble for India's middle class

By KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Ram Babu moved from his village to the Indian capital New Delhi in 1980, to clean cars. Soon, he learned to drive and got a job as a tour bus driver. Decades later, he set up his own company, Madhubani Tours and Travels.

In March 2020, a stringent nationwide lockdown to fight the coronavirus pandemic froze economic activity overnight. Babu's business collapsed, and he drove his family back to their village.

"Since March last year, we haven't earned a single rupee," he said. "All of my three buses are standing still for more than a year. We are completely broken."

India's economy was on the cusp of recovery from the first pandemic shock when a new wave of infections swept the country, infecting millions, killing hundreds of thousands and forcing many people to stay home. Cases are now tapering off, but prospects for many Indians are drastically worse as salaried jobs vanish, incomes shrink and inequality is rising.

Decades of progress in alleviating poverty are imperiled, experts say, and getting growth back on track hinges on the fate of the country's sprawling middle class. It's a powerful and diverse group ranging from salaried employees to small business owners like Babu: many millions of people struggling to hold onto

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their hard-earned gains.

The outbreak of the pandemic triggered the worst downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s and as it gradually ebbs, many economies are bouncing back. The World Bank foresees 5.6% global growth for 2021, the best since 1973.

India's economy contracted 7.3% in the fiscal year that ended in March, worsening from a slump that slashed growth to 4% from 8% in the two years before the pandemic hit. Economists fear there will be no rebound similar to the ones seen in the U.S. and other major economies.

"Coronavirus was the latest in a series of blows to hit India's economy in recent years," said Mahesh Vyas, chief executive at the Center for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE). "But the shocks brought on by the virus have had a very debilitating effect on the economy and I fear it is going to be long lasting."

The economy was one of the fastest growing when Prime Minister Narendra Modi suddenly yanked most of India's currency out of circulation in 2016, targeting corruption. A major tax reform whose kinks are still being ironed out followed. Modi's flagship Make in India program to energize manufacturing has floundered and unemployment has surged.

The poor are suffering the most from the pandemic. But this is the first time in several decades that India's middle class has taken such a big hit, said Vyas.

After 40 years of hard work, tour company owner Babu was taking home about \$2,000 a month. Business was going so well he took out a loan to buy his third tour bus.

In May 2020, he used one of those buses to drive his wife and three children back to Bhugol village in Bihar, one of India's poorest states. He could no longer afford the rent on their modest one-bedroom apartment in New Delhi.

Estimates of the size of India's middle class vary from 200 million to 600 million, but all experts agree that its prosperity is crucial for reviving the economy.

"They are the primary consumers — if their consumption doesn't revive, growth will continue to be slow and the economy will not recover," said economist Arun Kumar.

An analysis from the Pew Research Center, published in March, estimates 32 million Indians had been pushed out of the middle class by the pandemic.

The report defined the middle class as people earning \$10 to \$20 a day. It estimated the number of India's poor -- those with incomes of \$2 or less a day -- has increased by 75 million because of the crisis.

To cushion the impact, the government provided \$266 billion in extra spending in May 2020, with over \$40 billion meant to help small and medium-sized businesses through measures like collateral-free loans from banks. Another \$36 billion was promised in November to help create jobs, boost consumer spending and support manufacturing, agriculture and exports.

But for many, the measures haven't been enough. No relief has yet been announced for the tourism sector, so Babu is still paying business taxes on his buses.

Last year's lockdown destroyed more than 120 million jobs, according to the CMIE. Many returned soon after the lockdown ended in June, but the rebound was mostly of low-paying jobs in sectors like agriculture and construction.

Economists worry about a longer term decline in salaried jobs, of which 12.5 million remain lost, according to CMIE data, and about the fate of small and medium-sized businesses that are the backbone of India's vast informal economy.

Many people have had to settle for far more precarious employment than before, according to the State of Working India 2021 report by researchers at Azim Premji University.

"What this signals is that people in distress are having to resort to any kind of employment, even if it pays substantially less than what they were making and comes with fewer protections," said Rosa Abraham, one of the report's lead authors. "It's clear that the employment recovery we're seeing now is characterized to a significant extent by far more informality."

That's true for Bijender and Kanika Gautam, owners of the Ultra Bodies Fitness Studio on the outskirts of New Delhi.

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Gyms were among the last types of venues allowed to reopen from the 2020 lockdown and they were closed again during the latest outbreaks. The Gautams had been thriving on income from their 100 gym members, making enough to rent their two-story space and pay five trainers. Now, they're relying on whatever they can scrape together from offering online fitness training, and struggling to afford rent and school fees for their two children.

"Earlier, we didn't have to think twice about spending money when we went to the market with our children or went out to eat," said Bijender. "But now, the situation is so bad that we are somehow just trying to survive. We don't know if we will be able to keep our business," he said.

On a wider scale, such setbacks on a wide scale may undermine confidence and future growth, said CMIE's Vyas.

"You need that aspiration or drive to go to college, get a good job, save money to buy a home -- you need that ambition to make your life better than what your parents had. This is what makes the economy thrive, and this is a crucial thing that has taken a big hit," he said.

Babu says he fears his life is now moving in reverse. He had hoped his youngest daughter, aged 13, might become a pilot. Now that he's had to pull her out of her school in New Delhi, that seems impossible.

His dreams of buying a home in the city have been crushed by the loans he can no longer repay, he said in a phone call from his village.

"I'm not used to living in the village now. Everything we own, everything we are, it's all in Delhi," he said. "I should have just continued working as a driver, maybe then I wouldn't be in this mess."

## Suns spoil Nikola Jokic's MVP party, beat Nuggets 116-102

By ARNIE STAPLETON AP Sports Writer

DENVER (AP) — Deandre Ayton scrutinized the box score and couldn't believe his eyes as he read Nikola Jokic's stat line: 32 points, 20 rebounds, 10 assists.

"That's insane. That's the MVP," Ayton said after the Phoenix Suns overcame the Joker's historic triple-double to thump Denver 116-102 Friday night, putting the Nuggets on the brink of elimination.

Following a raucous pregame ceremony celebrating his MVP award, Jokic joined Wilt Chamberlain and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar as the only players with 30 points, 20 boards and 10 assists in an NBA playoff game. Jokic, though, was apologetic afterward, telling his teammates this loss was on him because of his 13-for-29 shooting performance.

Nonsense, said Denver guard Monte Morris, who called Jokic's performance phenomenal.

"He's carrying us," Morris said. "We've got to help him."

Morris scored 21 off the bench but Denver's four other starters scored just 30 points, half by Michael Porter Jr., who was 5 of 13 from the floor.

Devin Booker scored 28 points and teamed with Chris Paul to lead a steady offensive onslaught that countered Jokic's big night.

"We knew this was going to be an emotional game for them with Joker being presented with the trophy before the game," Paul said. "We just talked about withstanding their runs."

Jokic seemed to consider his big game more horrific than historic.

"I'm frustrated with myself because I missed shots," said Jokic, who also missed four of nine free throws. "I didn't play on top of my game, especially shooting wise. It would be much easier for us if I started making shots. Of course, they're making it tough for me to make shots."

With their sixth straight victory, the second-seeded Suns took a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven series. Game 4 is Sunday at Ball Arena.

Paul had 27 points, eight assists and three steals for the Suns, who pulled away after halftime for the third straight time. All five of Phoenix's starters scored in double figures.

They are a one win away from their first trip to the Western Conference Finals since 2009-10 — which was the last time Phoenix made the playoffs.

The third-seeded Nuggets, who reached the conference finals last year, are on the brink of getting swept

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in a playoff series for the first time since the Lakers bounced them out of the first round in 2007-08.

Jokic dedicated his MVP award to his teammates during a loud pregame ceremony that Nuggets coach Michael Malone had hoped would energize his team that has lost by 17, 25 and now 14 points in this second-round series.

"I just feel bad that we weren't able to pull out a win for them because they made this atmosphere electric," Malone said of the crowd of 18,277.

"During the trophy ceremony, we said right when they get off the court let's go out there and be locked in," Booker relayed.

Suns coach Monty Williams said his team was ready for the energy boost the big crowd supplied by serenading Jokic.

"We didn't want to disrespect Jokic's moment. At the same time, we also came here to win a game," Williams said. "That's something we stressed for a while, being able to have poise in those moments. Whether it's an emotional fouling situation or something like tonight."

The Nuggets' first MVP was mostly MIA early on as the Suns shot a sizzling 74.46% in jumping out to a 37-27 lead after one quarter. Jokic scored seven points in that quarter but none until the 4:45 mark.

Malone, who accused his team of quitting after a blowout loss in Game 2, said before tip-off that he liked his team's resiliency, and that opinion didn't change afterward.

"I thought our guys played really hard. I think we let it all out there," Malone said. "I really think this game came down to two things: turnovers" and the Suns' 14-2 run spanning the third and fourth quarter.

That's something they couldn't overcome, not even with their MVP giving them another epic MVP performance.

TIP-INS:

Suns: Phoenix led by double digits much of the first half, but went cold over the final 90 seconds of the second quarter, allowing the Nuggets to pull to 59-55 at halftime. ... The Suns shot 50% in the first half both from beyond the arc and from the field, and they made all 11 of their free throws.

Nuggets: Missed their first seven shots after halftime, sapping them of the momentum they took into the break by closing on a 6-0 run. ... Will Barton added 14 points in his second game back from a hamstring injury.

## Go green or go bipartisan? Biden's big infrastructure choice

By LISA MASCARO and MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's hopes of channeling billions of dollars into green infrastructure investments to fight climate change are running into the political obstacle of winning over Republican lawmakers who oppose that approach as unnecessary, excessive spending.

As negotiations unfold in Congress in search of a bipartisan deal, the White House's ability to ensure a climate focus in Biden's sweeping infrastructure package is becoming daunting — so much so that key Democrats are warning the administration to quit negotiating with Republicans, calling it a waste of time that will produce no viable compromise.

"From my perspective, no climate, no deal," said Sen. Ed Markey, D-Mass. "I won't just vote against an infrastructure package without climate action — I'll fight against it."

The debate is similar to the political and policy differences complicating Biden's broader talks over his ambitious infrastructure agenda, the sweeping \$1.7 trillion American Jobs Plan making its way through Congress, as Democrats and Republicans argue over what, exactly, constitutes infrastructure and how much is needed.

The White House is holding firm to Biden's initial ideas, which tally nearly \$1 trillion in climate-related investments that aim to bolster the electric vehicle market, make buildings and property more resilient to harsh weather patterns and push the country's electrical grid to become carbon-free by 2035.

The president is seeking a newer definition of infrastructure, trying not only to patch up the nation's roads and highways, but also to rebuild its economy with new kinds of investments for the 21st century.



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The Republicans prefer a more traditional approach that touches modestly on some climate-related elements but focuses more specifically on transportation and other typical developments.

As Biden courts a new bipartisan group of 10 senators, who are eyeing a scaled-down proposal, leading Democrats are worried their party is losing an opportunity with control of the House, Senate and White House to make gains on its climate change priorities.

"The President has underscored that climate change is one of the defining crises we face as a nation," White House deputy press secretary Andrew Bates said Friday, "and he and his team have continuously fought for leading on the clean energy economy and on clean energy jobs – which is critical for our economic growth, competitiveness, and middle class."

At a climate forum Friday, former Vice President Al Gore, who spoke to Biden last month, said: "I know he is committed to this issue. I know it very well because he knows and has said inaction is simply not an option."

For all the divisions, there may be some common ground between the White House and the Republicans, particularly with the GOP senators now engaged in bipartisan talks.

Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, a lead GOP negotiator, said he brought up flood resiliency and energy provisions that would benefit his state during a call with Biden on Tuesday. He was also seen engaged in a lengthy and somewhat animated conversation with Biden on the tarmac last month when the president visited Louisiana.

Hailing from a coastal state familiar with the hazards of harsh weather, Cassidy supports a bipartisan bill to offer tax breaks to property owners that protect homes and businesses against natural disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods and drought, and another to support projects that "capture" and store carbon dioxide produced by coal-fired plants and other fossil fuels. Louisiana has several sites vying to become a national hub for carbon capture.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has been largely silent on the bipartisan effort, and other GOP leaders are cool to this latest negotiation, doubtful their five Republican colleagues will find a compromise.

Sen. John Barrasso of Wyoming, the No. 3 in Republican leadership, told reporters, "The things you're going to need to do to get Democratic votes, it'd be hard to get any Republicans."

With the Congress narrowly split, and the Senate evenly divided, 50-50, Biden would need support from at least 10 Republicans to reach the 60-vote threshold required to break a filibuster by opponents. The president is encouraging Democrats to also launch a parallel track using budget reconciliation rules that would allow passage with 51 votes, achievable because Vice President Kamala Harris can cast a tiebreaking vote.

Still, the White House and Republicans remain far apart on key details, including the overall scope of the package and how to pay for it.

Biden wants to hike the corporate tax rate, from 21% to 28%, which Republicans oppose as a red line they will not cross.

Instead, the emerging bipartisan proposal from the 10 senators is expected to include an increase in the federal gas tax, which consumers pay at the pump, by linking it to inflation. Biden rejects that approach because he refuses to raise taxes on anyone making less than \$400,000 a year. The group also may tap unspent COVID-19 relief funds and go after unpaid income taxes.

Jamal Raad, executive director of Evergreen Action, an environmental group, said after months of negotiations that "it's clear there will never be 10 votes from the GOP caucus" for major investments like those proposed by the White House.

In the House, the Congressional Progressive Caucus' Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., tweeted: "An infrastructure bill that doesn't prioritize the climate crisis will not pass the House. Period."

And Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., a leading climate hawk, said he is "nervous" that Democrats may not be serious about addressing climate change in the infrastructure bill. "We are running out of time."

Biden administration officials say they understand the concerns. White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy said she and other officials "are going to fight like crazy" to make sure provisions, including a clean electricity standard, are included in the final bill.

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The standard calls for making the nation's electricity sector carbon-free by 2035, a key aspect of Biden's goal of halving the nation's greenhouse gas emissions.

Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club, said he and others are concerned about the extended effort to win over GOP votes they consider unlikely to succeed.

From his home in California, he said he sees the threat of wildfires and drought fueled by climate change on a daily basis. "We are in a dire moment, and we don't always have leadership that reflects that," he said.

## Seized House records show just how far Trump admin would go

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump has made no secret of his long list of political enemies. It just wasn't clear until now how far he would go to try to punish them.

Two House Democrats disclosed this week that their smartphone data was secretly obtained by the Trump Justice Department as part of an effort to uncover the source of leaks related to the investigation of Russian-related election interference.

It was a stunning revelation that one branch of government was using its power to gather private information on another, a move that carried echoes of President Richard Nixon during Watergate.

On Friday, the Justice Department's internal watchdog announced that it was investigating the records seizure. And Democratic leaders in Congress are demanding that former top Justice officials testify before a Senate committee to explain why the iPhone records of Reps. Adam Schiff and Eric Swalwell, both Democrats, and their family members were secretly subpoenaed in 2018. The records of at least 12 people were eventually shared by Apple.

The dispute showed that the rancorous partisan fights that coursed through the Trump presidency continue to play out in new and potentially damaging ways even as the Biden administration has worked to put those turbulent four years in the past.

White House spokesman Andrew Bates said the conduct of Trump's Justice Department was a shocking misuse of authority.

"Attorneys general's only loyalty should be to the rule of law — never to politics," he said.

The disclosure that the records had been seized raised a number of troubling questions. Who else may have been targeted? What was the legal justification to target members of Congress? Why did Apple, a company that prides itself on user privacy, hand over the records? And what end was the Trump Justice Department pursuing?

The revelations also are forcing the Biden Justice Department and Attorney General Merrick Garland to wade back into a fight with their predecessors.

"The question here is just how did Trump use his political power to go after his enemies — how did he use the government for his political benefit," said Kathleen Clark, legal ethics scholar at Washington University in St. Louis.

The effort to obtain the data came as Trump was publicly and privately fuming over investigations by Congress and then-special counsel Robert Mueller into his 2016 campaign's ties to Russia.

Trump inveighed against leaks throughout his time in office, accusing a "deep state" of working to undermine him by sharing unflattering information. He repeatedly called on his Justice Department and attorneys general to "go after the leakers," including singling out former FBI Director James Comey and Schiff, now chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

In May of 2018, he tweeted that reports of leaks in his White House were exaggerated, but said that nonetheless, "leakers are traitors and cowards, and we will find out who they are!"

Schiff and Swalwell were two of the most visible Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee, then led by Republicans, during the Russia inquiry. Both California lawmakers made frequent appearances on cable news shows. Trump watched those channels closely and seethed over the coverage.

There's no indication that the Justice Department used the records to prosecute anyone. After some of the leaked information was declassified and made public during the later years of the Trump administra-

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tion, there was concern among some of the prosecutors that even if they could bring a leak case, trying it would be difficult and a conviction would be unlikely, one person told The Associated Press. That person, a committee official and a third person with knowledge of the data seizures were granted anonymity to discuss them.

Federal agents questioned at least one former committee staff member in 2020, the person said, and ultimately, prosecutors weren't able to substantiate a case.

For decades, the Justice Department had worked to maintain strict barriers with the White House to avoid being used as a political tool to address a president's personal grievance.

For some, the Trump administration's effort is more disturbing than Nixon's actions during Watergate that forced his resignation. Nixon's were done in secret out of the White House, while the Trump administration moves to take the congressmen's records were approved by top Justice Department officials and worked on by prosecutors, who obtained secret subpoenas from a federal judge and then gag orders to keep them quiet.

"The fate of Richard Nixon had a restraining effect on political corruption in America," said Timothy Naftali, a Nixon scholar and former director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. "It didn't last forever, but the Republican Party wanted to cleanse itself of Nixon's bad apples and bad actors."

The Republican Party is far too aligned with Trump to do that now, but it doesn't mean Biden should let it go, Naftali said.

"The reason to do this is not revenge," Naftali said. "It's to send a signal to future American lawyers they will be held accountable."

While the Justice Department routinely conducts investigations of leaked information, including classified intelligence, opening such an investigation into members of Congress is extraordinarily rare.

A less rare but still uncommon tool is to secretly seize reporters' phone records, something the Trump Justice Department also did. Following an outcry from press freedom organizations, Garland announced last week that it would cease the practice of going after journalists' sourcing information.

The subpoenas were issued in 2018, when Jeff Sessions was attorney general, though he had recused himself in the Russia investigation, putting his deputy, Rod Rosenstein, in charge of Russia-related matters. The investigation later picked up momentum again under Attorney General William Barr.

Apple informed the committee last month that the records had been shared and that the investigation had been closed, but did not give extensive detail. Also seized were the records of aides, former aides and family members, one of them a minor, according to the committee official.

The Justice Department obtained metadata — probably records of calls, texts and locations — but not other content from the devices, like photos, messages or emails, according to one of the people. Another said that Apple complied with the subpoena, providing the information to the Justice Department, and did not immediately notify the members of Congress or the committee about the disclosure.

And the people whose records were seized were unable to challenge the Justice Department because the subpoenas went to Apple directly. The gag order was renewed three times before it lapsed and the company informed its customers May 5 what had happened.

Apple said in a statement that it couldn't even challenge the warrants because it had so little information available and "it would have been virtually impossible for Apple to understand the intent of the desired information without digging through users' accounts."

Patrick Toomey, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, said the seizure of congressional records was part of a series of Trump-era investigations that "raise profound civil liberties concerns and involve spying powers that have no place in our democracy."

## Embiid, 76ers beat Hawks 127-111 to take 2-1 lead in series

By CHARLES ODUM AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Joel Embiid kept taking falls. He also kept rising to his feet.

Nothing was going to take Philadelphia's big center off the court with the playoff series lead on the line.

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Embiid scored 27 points and the 76ers rode a dominant third quarter to a 127-111 victory over the Atlanta Hawks on Friday night and a 2-1 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinal series.

Embiid, playing with a cartilage tear in his right knee, added nine rebounds, eight assists and three blocked shots. He played 34 minutes despite turning his ankle on one fall and landing hard on his back on another.

"I'm OK," Embiid said. "I'm standing up. I'm walking. I finished the game. So I'm gonna keep getting back up. I'm going to keep fighting. That's been me since I've been playing basketball. ... Whatever happens, get back up and keep it going."

Tobias Harris had 22 points and Ben Simmons added 18 to help the 76ers end Atlanta's streak of 13 home wins. The 76ers have taken the series lead with back-to-back wins.

Simmons has had primary defensive responsibility against Trae Young, who led Atlanta with 28 points, in each of the 76ers' two wins in the series. On Friday night, he was challenged to take a bigger offensive role, especially with Embiid facing constant double-teams.

"I was just trying to push the pace and get in the lane, stay aggressive and get to the rim, get into a rhythm," Simmons said. "I think I did a good job of that in the second half."

The 76ers played up to their No. 1 seed, taking a lead of 22 points and keeping the advantage in double figures most of the second half. The Hawks played from behind after their last lead at 11-10.

Trae Young led Atlanta with 28 points. John Collins had 23 and Bogdan Bogdanovic 19.

Game 4 is Monday night in Atlanta.

The Hawks have difficulty matching up with Embiid (7-0, 280) but also have size disadvantages at other spots, including with the 6-foot-9 Simmons guarding the 6-foot-1 Young.

"It's not anything we can't adjust to," Young said.

But when asked what the Hawks can do, Young added "Obviously, if I had the answers, we wouldn't be talking about it right now."

The 76ers outscored the Hawks 66-58 in the paint and 15-6 on fast breaks.

"I think their size has had an impact on this series," Hawks coach Nate McMillan said. "They just pretty much pounded us in the paint tonight."

After leading 65-60 early in the third period, Philadelphia took command with an 11-0 run. The 76ers outscored the Hawks 34-19 in the third period.

Simmons had two baskets during the run, including a jam for a 76-60 lead.

Atlanta couldn't regain the momentum as the 76ers stretched the lead to 20 points, 93-73, late in the period.

Embiid, who faced constant double-teams from Atlanta's defense, made 12 of 16 free throws.

Embiid had a scare in the third quarter when he limped and appeared to be in pain after grabbing a rebound. Embiid appeared to step awkwardly on Clint Capela's foot, turning his ankle.

"He's playing hard," said 76ers coach Doc Rivers. "He's giving us everything. ... He is going through a lot, I'll tell you that."

TIP-INS

76ers: G Danny Green suffered a right calf strain less than four minutes into the game and did not return. Matisse Thybulle replaced Green. Rivers said he had no update but added "calf injuries aren't great." ... Harris hit the back of his head on a camera while falling on the baseline with 9:16 remaining in the fourth quarter. Harris walked off after being checked by trainers and returned to the game.

Hawks: Atlanta's last home loss was April 15 against Milwaukee. The 13-game home winning streak was the NBA's longest active streak. ... F Cam Reddish (right Achilles soreness) has participated in two-on-two and three-on-three drills but has not yet moved up to full five-on-five sessions. Reddish, who ultimately could help fill the void left by De'Andre Hunter's season-ending knee surgery scheduled for Tuesday, does not appear likely to return against the 76ers.

KORKMAZ EMERGES

After Shake Milton energized the 76ers by scoring 14 points off the bench in Game 2, Philadelphia found bench production from a different source.

Furkan Korkmaz, who scored a combined seven points in the first two games of the series, scored 11

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points in the opening period while making two 3s. He added another 3 in the fourth for 14 points.

"It was huge," Embiid said. "We got that early lead because of him."

## JUMPING TO HIS OWN DEFENSE

76ers coach Doc Rivers says he always "feels great" when he returns to Atlanta, where he began his playing career as the Hawks' point guard. He reminded reporters before the game he still holds the Hawks' career assists record.

Rivers felt compelled to mention his link to one of the game's all-time greats, Julius Erving — better known as Dr. J — when defending his talents to his skeptical players.

"They don't believe I could jump at all," Rivers said before the game. "... I said, 'You guys do know I'm named Doc. It's not after a doctor. It's after a guy who could jump.'"

Rivers had 3,866 assists with Atlanta from 1983-91. Mookie Blaylock is second with 3,764.

## AP Interview: Iraq oil minister says gas sector a priority

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's oil sector is rebounding after a catastrophic year triggered by the coronavirus pandemic, with key investment projects on the horizon, Iraq's oil minister said Friday. But he also warned that an enduring bureaucratic culture of fear threatens to stand in the way.

Iraq is currently trading oil at \$68 per barrel, close to the approximately \$76 needed for the state to operate without reliance on the central bank to meet government expenditures.

Oil Minister Ihsan Abdul-Jabbar Ismail took over the unenviable job of supervising Iraq's most vital industry at the height of an oil price crash that slashed oil revenues by more than half last year. Since then, he has had to balance domestic demands for more revenue to fund state coffers and pressure from OPEC to keep exports low to stabilize the global oil market.

With the sector rebounding, Ismail told The Associated Press, he can now focus on other priorities. In the interview, he offered a rare glimpse into the inner-workings of the country's most significant ministry — Iraq's oil industry is responsible for 90% of state revenues.

He said cutthroat Iraqi politics and corruption fears often derailed critical investment projects during his tenure and those of his predecessors — a source of long-term frustration for international companies working in Iraq.

"In the Ministry of Oil, the big mistake, the big challenge are the delays in decision-making or no decision-making at all," he said, attributing indecisiveness to fears of political reprisal from groups or powerful lawmakers whose interests are not served.

He described what he said was a warped work culture where allegations of corruption are used as tools by political players to get their way. He alleged that the mere possibility is often enough to keep high-ranking officials in ministry from signing off on important projects.

"This is the culture: To stay away from any case, to stay away from inspectors, to say 'let us not do it,'" he added. "I think this is the corruption that slows the economy."

He said that during his time as minister he has sought to fast-track projects, he said.

Top on his list is developing the country's gas sector, a central condition for Iraq to be eligible for U.S. sanction waivers enabling energy imports from neighboring Iran. To that end, Iraq is looking to develop long-neglected gas fields and capture gas flared from oil sites.

Ismail said he is hopeful contracts will be signed within the coming months to develop key projects that could boost Iraq's gas capacity by 3 billion cubic standard feet by 2025. But that all depends on closing the deal with oil companies; lucrative contract negotiations in Iraq have a history of stalling once commercial terms are laid out.

Iraq currently imports 2 billion standard cubic feet to meet domestic needs.

The ministry is close to signing with China's Sinopec to develop Mansuriya gas field in Diyala province, said Ismail. The field could add 300 million standard cubic feet of gas to domestic production. He hopes to finalize the deal by mid-July.

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The ministry is also in talks with France's Total to develop an ambitious multi-billion dollar mega investment project in southern Iraq, including the Ratawi gas hub, development of Ratawi oil field and a scheme to provide water to oil fields required to boost production.

Early talks are also ongoing to develop Akkas gas field in Anbar province, with the American Schlumberger and Saudi Arabia's oil giant Aramco, he said, expressing hopes for an agreement there too.

Though negotiations with international companies have picked up speed, Ismail said entrenched indecision within his ministry persists. Investors have blamed glacial bureaucracy and indecision within ministry ranks for thwarting projects.

Among his deepest regrets is the collapse in talks — after five years of negotiations — between the ministry and Exxon-Mobil over a multi-billion dollar investment project that would have been key to increasing Iraq's production and exports.

"For me it was a big mistake from our side," said Ismail, who was the former director-general of the state-owned Basra Oil Company.

Ismail himself came under scrutiny when lawmakers accused him of corruption. The Cabinet dismissed him as head of the Basra company in October 2019 during a purge against alleged corruption. He was reinstated a few months later.

Iraqi media are often used as a pressure tool, Ismail said

"Someone sends me a contract, and it would be illegal to say yes, so I say no, and he starts to say bad things in the media," Ismail said.

Also, he said 80% of his time is spent fielding requests from political parties and individuals asking for employment, contracts or job transfers — requests he says he routinely rejects.

"They say: 'Move this person from this position to this, we need this position, we need this department, we need this company,'" he said.

## Sheriff: Florida supermarket shooter made Facebook threats

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — The gunman who stalked and then fatally shot a grandmother and her 1-year-old grandson inside a Florida supermarket had been threatening to kill people, including children, on his Facebook page but no one reported him, a Florida sheriff said Friday.

Timothy J. Wall, 55, had been making the threats for some time before he walked into a Publix in Royal Palm Beach on Thursday, stalked his victims in the produce aisle before first shooting the child and then the woman before killing himself, Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw and his detectives said. Detectives have found no connection between Wall and the woman.

"He has said, 'I want to kill people and children.' He's got friends. Obviously, they saw that. His ex-wife said that he has been acting strange. He thinks he is being followed. He's paranoid. Do you think a damn soul told us about that? No," Bradshaw said at a press conference. "If it sounds like I'm angry, I am."

Under Florida's so-called Red Flag Law, a law enforcement agency can seek an order from a judge to seize the firearms of anyone shown to be a danger to themselves or others and hold them for a year. That can be extended if an agency shows the person is still a danger.

It was enacted in 2018 by the Republican-led Legislature shortly after a former student with a history of mental and emotional problems killed 17 students and staff at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, less than an hour's drive from Thursday's shooting.

Facebook also allows users to report troubling posts and will forward them to law enforcement.

"That's how this could have been prevented. If somebody would have let us know who he is, we would have contacted him, seen if he has got a gun, gotten him into mental health and you wouldn't have two people dead," Bradshaw said. "This didn't have to happen."

The ex-wife's family told the Palm Beach Post she did try to get Wall help, but no one listened.

"He had mental issues. He wasn't taking care of himself," said Maia Knight, Wall's former sister-in-law. "My sister was going to the courthouse, going to police, telling everyone he needs help. My sister was

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trying to help him but didn't know how."

The Associated Press isn't naming the ex-wife to protect her privacy. She did not return a call Friday seeking comment.

Wall's family released a statement to The Associated Press. An attorney for the family said the relatives weren't interested in doing interviews, and they were hoping reporters would stop trying to contact Wall's elderly mother.

"We are heartbroken at the loss of a child, and a grandmother, and of Timothy's death," the statement said. "We want to express our deepest condolences to the family of the young victim and his grandmother. During this difficult time, we ask that our family be given the time and respect to grieve and process this horrible tragedy. We hope that the same respect will be given to the victims and their family members."

Maj. Talal Masri, the lead detective, said the 69-year-old woman pushed her grandson into the store shortly after 11 a.m. Thursday, using a cart shaped like a race car so toddlers can play while the adult shops. Authorities have not released the victims' names, citing a state law that allows survivors to block their release.

About 20 minutes later, Wall arrived at the store on a red scooter. He and his ex-wife had previously owned a dry cleaner in the shopping center, state records show, but it is unknown when it closed. Video shows he had been inside both the Publix and a nearby drugstore earlier in the morning and had approached people but then turned away, Masri said.

This time, Wall entered the Publix using a golf putter as a walking stick. He walked around for a few minutes before entering the produce section, where the woman was shopping with her grandson still in the cart.

He followed them for about three minutes before he pulled a handgun and shot the child, Masri said. The woman jumped on him and Wall's gun briefly jammed. She fell to the floor and he shot her and then himself. All died at the scene.

The shooting sent dozens of employees and customers fleeing the store, but no other injuries were reported.

Wall had been in financial and personal disarray for years before the shooting.

Earlier this year, Wall had declared bankruptcy. In his filing, he listed \$6,000 in assets, including \$9 in checking, \$18 in savings, \$4,100 in a stock trading account, \$740 in bitcoin and a \$300 gun. He said he earned \$24,000 last year as a laborer working through a temp agency and his mode of transportation was the \$600 scooter he rode to the killings.

Meanwhile, he had accumulated more than \$215,000 in debts, most of it owed on the home his ex-wife now owns, the bankruptcy file shows. She divorced him in 2018 and he had signed over their house to her in 2019, Palm Beach County court records show.

No previous criminal record for Wall could be found. Wall's bankruptcy lawyer, Ryan Loyacano, did not return a call and an email seeking comment.

Publix is Florida's largest grocery chain and has more than 1,200 stores in the Southern United States. The company said in a Thursday statement that it was cooperating with law enforcement. The sheriff's office said the supermarket would be closed until Saturday.

Royal Palm Beach is a middle-class suburb of 40,000 residents, about 15 miles (24 kilometers) inland from Palm Beach.

## G-7 pledge to share, but jostle for ground in the sandbox

By JILL LAWLESS, DANICA KIRKA and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

CARBIS BAY, England (AP) — Group of Seven leaders brought pledges to share vaccine doses and make a fairer global economy Friday to a seaside summit in England, where British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the coronavirus pandemic should not be allowed to leave a "lasting scar" on the world.

The wealthy nations' leaders were all smiles and unity as Johnson greeted them on the freshly raked sand of Carbis Bay, but they jostled over who was doing most to help the world's poorer nations fight COVID-19.

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Recovery from the pandemic was set to dominate their discussions, and members of the wealthy democracies club committed to sharing at least 1 billion vaccine shots with struggling countries. That includes a pledge from U.S. President Joe Biden to share 500 million doses, and a promise from Johnson for another 100 million shots.

Host Britain said the G-7 will also announce a package of measures aimed at reducing the chances of another pandemic. The U.K. government said the grandly titled "Carbis Bay Declaration" will aim for a 100-day goal to develop vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for future disease and to bolster surveillance for new illnesses.

The group will also pledge to strengthen the World Health Organization, which former President Donald Trump pulled out of and Biden rejoined.

Johnson said the goal of the measures was "to make sure that never again will we be caught unawares."

Opening three days of talks in Cornwall, southwest England, Johnson warned that world leaders must not repeat errors made over the past 18 months — or those made in the recovery from the 2008 global financial crisis.

"It is vital that we don't repeat the mistake of the last great crisis, the last great economic recession in 2008, when the recovery was not uniform across all parts of society," he said after leaders posed for a formal "family photo" by the sea.

"And I think what's gone wrong with this pandemic, and what risks being a lasting scar, is that I think the inequalities may be entrenched," Johnson added.

The leaders of the G-7 — which also includes the United States Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan — hope the meeting at the resort will also energize the global economy. Beneath moody dark skies, the group walked away from the photo as cheerful as children who had just built a sand castle.

As Johnson led the politicians off the beach, French President Emmanuel Macron threw his arm around the shoulders of Biden, whom he was meeting for the first time. The White House later said the two men discussed COVID-19 and counterterrorism efforts in the Sahel region of Africa and would have a meeting on Saturday.

Facing criticism that they are hogging vaccines, the leaders are competing to be the global champion of so many wounded by the virus. With 3.7 million people lost in the pandemic, the world's richest democracies are eager to show themselves the champions of the afflicted.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she hoped the summit would show the world "we're not just thinking of ourselves." Macron sought to underscore that, noting that France had already shipped vaccine doses to the world's poor — and gently chiding countries that have not by urging in a tweet for "clear goals" and "concrete commitments."

For Johnson, the first G-7 summit in two years — last year's was scuttled by the pandemic — is a chance to set out his vision of a post-Brexit "global Britain" as a mid-sized country with an outsized role in international problem-solving.

On Friday Queen Elizabeth II — Britain's biggest global star — traveled from Windsor Castle near London for a reception with the leaders and their spouses at the Eden Project, a futuristic botanical garden housed inside domes that features the world's largest indoor rainforest.

The 95-year-old monarch drew laughter from her guests as she chided them during a group photo session: "Are you supposed to be looking as if you're enjoying yourself?"

Senior royals — including heir to the throne Prince Charles, his son Prince William and William's wife, Kate — joined the leaders for the reception and a dinner of roasted turbot, Cornish new potatoes and greens with wild garlic pesto cooked by a local chef.

The choice of an ecologically themed venue was deliberate. Climate change is also a top issue on the agenda, and hundreds of protesters gathered in Cornwall to urge the leaders to act, some dressed as sea creatures such as jellyfish. Demonstrators deployed a barge off the coast with two large inflatable figures depicting Biden and Johnson on board.

The G-7 is also set to formally embrace a global minimum tax of at least 15% on multinational corporations, following an agreement reached a week ago by their finance ministers. The minimum is meant to



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stop companies from using tax havens to shift profits and to avoid taxes.

It represents a potential win for the Biden administration, which has proposed a global minimum tax as a way to pay for infrastructure projects, and it dovetails with the president's hope to focus the summit on ways the democracies can collaborate to build a more inclusive and fair global economy to help compete with rising autocracies like China.

But the main issue of the day was vaccines and the mounting pressure to outline global vaccine-sharing plans, especially as inequities in supply around the world have become more pronounced. In the U.S., there is a large vaccine stockpile, and the demand for shots has dropped precipitously in recent weeks.

Biden said the U.S. will donate 500 million Pfizer vaccine doses in the next year, 200 million of them by the end of 2021. That commitment was on top of 80 million doses Biden has already pledged to donate by the end of June. A price tag for the doses was not released, but the U.S. is now set to be the largest donor to the international COVAX vaccine effort, as well as its biggest funder.

Johnson said the first 5 million U.K. doses would be shared in the coming weeks, with the remainder coming over the next year. Macron said France would share at least 30 million doses globally by year's end. Germany plans to donate the same amount. White House officials said the G-7 leaders on Friday committed to 1 billion doses in all.

The COVAX vaccination campaign got off to a slow start as richer nations locked up billions of doses through contracts directly with drug manufacturers. The alliance has distributed just 81 million doses globally, and large parts of the world, particularly in Africa, remain vaccine deserts.

Humanitarian workers welcomed the new donations but said the world needs more doses and sooner.

"We are still far from getting there," said United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who is due to attend the summit Saturday as a guest.

"We need a concerted effort. We need a global vaccination plan," he added. "If not the risk is there will still be large areas of the developing world where the virus spreads like wildfire."

Biden will wrap up his eight-day journey by meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva. Asked on the beach Friday what his message would be, Biden said, "I'll tell you after I deliver it."

Putin, in an interview with NBC, said Russia's relations with the U.S. had deteriorated to their lowest point in recent years.

Asked if he agreed with Biden's assessment in March that he is a killer, Putin laughed and said the criticism was part of America's macho attitude. "I've gotten used to attacks from all kinds of angles and from all kinds of areas under all kinds of pretext, and reasons of different caliber and fierceness and none of it surprises me," he said, adding, "So, as far as harsh rhetoric, I think that this is an expression of overall U.S. culture."

## Seized House records show just how far Trump admin would go

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump has made no secret of his long list of political enemies. It just wasn't clear until now how far he would go to try to punish them.

Two House Democrats disclosed this week that their smartphone data was secretly obtained by the Trump Justice Department as part of an effort to uncover the source of leaks related to the investigation of Russian-related election interference.

It was a stunning revelation that one branch of government was using its power to gather private information on another, a move that carried echoes of President Richard Nixon during Watergate.

On Friday, the Justice Department's internal watchdog announced that it was investigating the records seizure. And Democratic leaders in Congress are demanding that former top Justice officials testify before a Senate committee to explain why the iPhone records of Reps. Adam Schiff and Eric Swalwell, both Democrats, and their family members were secretly subpoenaed in 2018. The records of at least 12 people were eventually shared by Apple.

The dispute showed that the rancorous partisan fights that coursed through the Trump presidency con-

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tinue to play out in new and potentially damaging ways even as the Biden administration has worked to put those turbulent four years in the past.

White House spokesman Andrew Bates said the conduct of Trump's Justice Department was a shocking misuse of authority.

"Attorneys general's only loyalty should be to the rule of law — never to politics," he said.

The disclosure that the records had been seized raised a number of troubling questions. Who else may have been targeted? What was the legal justification to target members of Congress? Why did Apple, a company that prides itself on user privacy, hand over the records? And what end was the Trump Justice Department pursuing?

The revelations also are forcing the Biden Justice Department and Attorney General Merrick Garland to wade back into a fight with their predecessors.

"The question here is just how did Trump use his political power to go after his enemies — how did he use the government for his political benefit," said Kathleen Clark, legal ethics scholar at Washington University in St. Louis.

The effort to obtain the data came as Trump was publicly and privately fuming over investigations by Congress and then-special counsel Robert Mueller into his 2016 campaign's ties to Russia.

Trump inveighed against leaks throughout his time in office, accusing a "deep state" of working to undermine him by sharing unflattering information. He repeatedly called on his Justice Department and attorneys general to "go after the leakers," including singling out former FBI Director James Comey and Schiff, now chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

In May of 2018, he tweeted that reports of leaks in his White House were exaggerated, but said that nonetheless, "leakers are traitors and cowards, and we will find out who they are!"

Schiff and Swalwell were two of the most visible Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee, then led by Republicans, during the Russia inquiry. Both California lawmakers made frequent appearances on cable news shows. Trump watched those channels closely and seethed over the coverage.

There's no indication that the Justice Department used the records to prosecute anyone. After some of the leaked information was declassified and made public during the later years of the Trump administration, there was concern among some of the prosecutors that even if they could bring a leak case, trying it would be difficult and a conviction would be unlikely, one person told The Associated Press. That person, a committee official and a third person with knowledge of the data seizures were granted anonymity to discuss them.

Federal agents questioned at least one former committee staff member in 2020, the person said, and ultimately, prosecutors weren't able to substantiate a case.

For decades, the Justice Department had worked to maintain strict barriers with the White House to avoid being used as a political tool to address a president's personal grievance.

For some, the Trump administration's effort is more disturbing than Nixon's actions during Watergate that forced his resignation. Nixon's were done in secret out of the White House, while the Trump administration moves to take the congressmen's records were approved by top Justice Department officials and worked on by prosecutors, who obtained secret subpoenas from a federal judge and then gag orders to keep them quiet.

"The fate of Richard Nixon had a restraining effect on political corruption in America," said Timothy Naftali, a Nixon scholar and former director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. "It didn't last forever, but the Republican Party wanted to cleanse itself of Nixon's bad apples and bad actors."

The Republican Party is far too aligned with Trump to do that now, but it doesn't mean Biden should let it go, Naftali said.

"The reason to do this is not revenge," Naftali said. "It's to send a signal to future American lawyers they will be held accountable."

While the Justice Department routinely conducts investigations of leaked information, including classified intelligence, opening such an investigation into members of Congress is extraordinarily rare.

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A less rare but still uncommon tool is to secretly seize reporters' phone records, something the Trump Justice Department also did. Following an outcry from press freedom organizations, Garland announced last week that it would cease the practice of going after journalists' sourcing information.

The subpoenas were issued in 2018, when Jeff Sessions was attorney general, though he had recused himself in the Russia investigation, putting his deputy, Rod Rosenstein, in charge of Russia-related matters. The investigation later picked up momentum again under Attorney General William Barr.

Apple informed the committee last month that the records had been shared and that the investigation had been closed, but did not give extensive detail. Also seized were the records of aides, former aides and family members, one of them a minor, according to the committee official.

The Justice Department obtained metadata — probably records of calls, texts and locations — but not other content from the devices, like photos, messages or emails, according to one of the people. Another said that Apple complied with the subpoena, providing the information to the Justice Department, and did not immediately notify the members of Congress or the committee about the disclosure.

And the people whose records were seized were unable to challenge the Justice Department because the subpoenas went to Apple directly. The gag order was renewed three times before it lapsed and the company informed its customers May 5 what had happened.

Apple said in a statement that it couldn't even challenge the warrants because it had so little information available and "it would have been virtually impossible for Apple to understand the intent of the desired information without digging through users' accounts."

Patrick Toomey, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, said the seizure of congressional records was part of a series of Trump-era investigations that "raise profound civil liberties concerns and involve spying powers that have no place in our democracy."

## Ice shelf protecting Antarctic glacier is breaking up faster

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

A critical Antarctic glacier is looking more vulnerable as satellite images show the ice shelf that blocks it from collapsing into the sea is breaking up much faster than before and spawning huge icebergs, a new study says.

The Pine Island Glacier's ice shelf loss accelerated in 2017, causing scientists to worry that with climate change the glacier's collapse could happen quicker than the many centuries predicted. The floating ice shelf acts like a cork in a bottle for the fast-melting glacier and prevents its much larger ice mass from flowing into the ocean.

That ice shelf has retreated by 12 miles (20 kilometers) between 2017 and 2020, according to a study in Friday's Science Advances. The crumbling shelf was caught on time-lapse video from a European satellite that takes pictures every six days.

"You can see stuff just tearing apart," said study lead author Ian Joughin, a University of Washington glaciologist. "So it almost looks like the speed-up itself is weakening the glacier. ... And so far we've lost maybe 20% of the main shelf."

Between 2017 and 2020, there were three large breakup events, creating icebergs more than 5 miles (8 kilometers) long and 22 miles (36 kilometers) wide, which then split into lots of littler pieces, Joughin said. There also were many smaller breakups.

"It's not at all inconceivable that the whole shelf could give way and go within a few years," Joughin said. "I'd say that's a long shot, but not a very long shot."

Joughin tracked two points on the main glacier and found they were moving 12% faster toward the sea starting in 2017.

"So that means 12% more ice from Pine Island going into the ocean that wasn't there before," he said.

The Pine Island Glacier, which is not on an island doesn't have pine trees, is one of two side-by-side glaciers in western Antarctica that ice scientists worry most about losing on that continent. The other is the Thwaites Glacier.

Pine Island contains 180 trillion tons of ice — the equivalent of 1.6 feet (half a meter) of sea level rise

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— and is responsible for about a quarter of the continent's ice loss.

"Pine Island and Thwaites are our biggest worry now because they are falling apart and then the rest of West Antarctica will follow according to nearly all models," said University of California Irvine ice scientist Isabella Velicogna, who wasn't part of the study.

While ice loss is part of climate change, there was no unusual extra warming in the region that triggered this acceleration, Joughin said.

"These science results continue to highlight the vulnerability of Antarctica, a major reservoir for potential sea level rise," said Twila Moon, a National Snow and Ice Data scientist who wasn't part of the research. "Again and again, other research has confirmed how Antarctica evolves in the future will depend on human greenhouse gas emissions."

## Justice Dept., Congress probing Trump seizures of Dems' data

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department's internal watchdog launched an investigation Friday after revelations that former President Donald Trump's administration secretly seized phone data from at least two House Democrats as part of an aggressive leaks probe. Democrats called the seizures "harrowing" and an abuse of power.

The announcement by Inspector General Michael Horowitz came shortly after Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco made the request for an internal investigation. Horowitz said he would examine whether the data subpoenaed by the Justice Department and turned over by Apple followed department policy and "whether any such uses, or the investigations, were based upon improper considerations."

Horowitz said he would also investigate similar Trump-era seizures of journalists' phone records.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., and another Democratic member of the panel, California Rep. Eric Swalwell, said Apple notified them last month that their metadata had been subpoenaed and turned over to the Justice Department in 2018, as their committee was investigating the former president's ties to Russia. Schiff was then the top Democrat on the panel, which was led by Republicans.

While the Justice Department routinely investigates leaked information, including classified intelligence, subpoenaing the private information of members of Congress is extraordinarily rare. The disclosures, first reported by The New York Times, raise questions about what the Justice Department's justification was for spying on another branch of government and whether it was done for political reasons.

In a statement, White House deputy press secretary Andrew Bates said the Trump administration's conduct is "shocking" and "clearly fits within an appalling trend that represents the opposite of how authority should be used."

Bates said one of President Joe Biden's top reasons for seeking the presidency was "his predecessor's unjustifiable abuses of power, including the repugnant ways he tried to force his political interests upon the Department of Justice."

The Trump administration's secretive move to gain access to the data came as the president was fuming publicly and privately over investigations — in Congress and by then-special counsel Robert Mueller — into his campaign's ties to Russia. Trump called the probes a "witch hunt," regularly criticized Democrats and Mueller on Twitter and dismissed as "fake news" leaks he found harmful to his agenda. As the investigations swirled around him, he demanded loyalty from a Justice Department he often regarded as his personal law firm.

Swalwell and Schiff were two of the most visible Democrats on the committee during the Russia probe, making frequent appearances on cable news. Trump watched those channels closely, if not obsessively, and seethed over the coverage.

Schiff said the seizures suggest "the weaponization of law enforcement by a corrupt president" and urged the Justice Department to do "a full damage assessment of the conduct of the department over the last four years."

Senate Democratic leaders immediately demanded that former Attorneys General Bill Barr and Jeff

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Sessions, who both oversaw Trump's leak probes, testify about the secret subpoenas. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Dick Durbin said in a statement that "this appalling politicization of the Department of Justice by Donald Trump and his sycophants" must be investigated. They said Barr and Sessions are subject to a subpoena if they refuse.

Prosecutors from Trump's Justice Department had subpoenaed Apple for the data. The records of at least 12 people connected to the intelligence panel were eventually shared by the company, including aides, former aides and family members. One was a minor.

The subpoena, issued in February 2018, requested information on 73 phone numbers and 36 email addresses, Apple said. It also included a non-disclosure order that prohibited the company from notifying any of the people, the company said in a statement. The subpoena didn't include any context about the investigation and it would have been "virtually impossible for Apple to understand the intent of the desired information without digging through users' accounts," the company said.

Apple informed the committee last month that the records had been shared and that the investigation had been closed, but did not give extensive detail. The committee official and the two others with knowledge of the data seizures were granted anonymity to discuss them.

The Justice Department obtained the metadata — often records of calls, texts and locations — but not other content from the devices, like photos, messages or emails. The order prohibiting Apple from discussing the subpoena, or notifying the people whose records were being seized, was extended three times, one each year, Apple said.

"We regularly challenge warrants, subpoenas and nondisclosure orders and have made it our policy to inform affected customers of governmental requests about them just as soon as possible," the company statement said.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said in a statement that the data seizures "appear to be yet another egregious assault on our democracy" by the former president.

"The news about the politicization of the Trump Administration Justice Department is harrowing," she said.

The committee official said the House intelligence panel will ask Apple to look into whether additional lawmakers were targeted. The Justice Department has not been forthcoming on questions such as whether the investigation was properly predicated and whether it only focused on Democrats, the official said.

It is unclear why Trump's Justice Department would have targeted a minor as part of the probe. Swallow, confirming that he was told his records were seized, told CNN on Thursday night that he was aware a minor was involved and believed that person was "targeted punitively and not for any reason in law."

The Senate Intelligence Committee was not similarly targeted, according to a fourth person who was aware of the probe and granted anonymity to discuss it.

There's no indication that the Justice Department used the records to prosecute anyone. After some information related to the Russia investigation was declassified and made public during the later years of the Trump administration, some of the prosecutors were concerned that even if they could bring a leak case, conviction would be unlikely, one of the people said.

Federal agents questioned at least one former committee staff member in 2020, the person said, and ultimately, prosecutors weren't able to substantiate a case.

The news follows revelations that the Justice Department had secretly seized phone records belonging to reporters at The New York Times, The Washington Post and CNN as part of criminal leak investigations. Following an outcry from press freedom organizations, the Justice Department announced last week that it would cease the practice of going after journalists' sourcing information.

## Djokovic hands Nadal 3rd loss in 108 French Open matches

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Sprinting, sliding and stretching, anticipating each other's moves for four sets and more than four hours, Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal produced a masterpiece in the French Open semifinals.

Djokovic, as it happens, is one of only two men in tennis history who knows what it takes to beat Nadal

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at Roland Garros. And now Djokovic has done it twice — this time ending Nadal's bid for a 14th championship there and record-breaking 21st Grand Slam title overall by coming back to win their 58th career matchup 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-2 on Friday night.

"Just one of these nights and matches that you will remember forever," said the top-seeded Djokovic, who trailed 2-0 in the closing set before reeling off the last half-dozen games to reach his sixth final at the clay-court major tournament.

"Definitely the best match that I was part of ever in Roland Garros, for me, and (one of the) top-three matches that I ever played in my entire career — considering quality of tennis, playing my biggest rival on the court where he has had so much success and has been the dominant force in the last 15-plus years," Djokovic said, "and the atmosphere, which was completely electric."

It was Nadal's third loss in 108 matches at a tournament he won each of the last four years, including by beating Djokovic in the 2020 final.

Nadal's first defeat at the French Open came against Robin Soderling in 2009; the next against Djokovic in 2015.

"Each time you step on the court with him," Djokovic said, "you know that you have to kind of climb Mt. Everest to win against this guy here."

And to think: There wasn't even a trophy at stake in this one. That will happen Sunday, when Djokovic, a 34-year-old from Serbia, faces Stefanos Tsitsipas, a 22-year-old from Greece.

The fifth-seeded Tsitsipas edged sixth-seeded Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 earlier Friday to reach his first Grand Slam final. It's Djokovic's 29th as he seeks a second title at the French Open and 19th major championship overall to pull within one of the men's Slam mark shared by Nadal and Roger Federer.

Tsitsipas already had given away all of a two-set lead in his semifinal Friday when he double-faulted to trail love-40 in the opening game of the fifth. But Tsitsipas steeled himself to win five consecutive points, then broke to go up 3-1.

"I'm someone who fights. I was not willing to give up yet. I think I did few things right that worked in my favor," said Tsitsipas, who entered the day 0-3 in major semifinals.

"It was a breath of fresh air, that first game," he said. "I felt revitalized."

His semifinal offered a measure of drama. But in truth, Tsitsipas-Zverev was merely an opening act before the headliners.

Nadal and Djokovic really riled up the raucous crowd at Court Philippe Chatrier.

Midway through the third set, Djokovic won a 23-stroke point with a forehand winner and windmilled his arms a half-dozen times, earning a standing ovation and chants of "No-vak! No-vak!" On the very next point, Nadal produced a forehand winner and screamed, prompting chants of "Ra-fa! Ra-fa!" and a wave in the stands.

Nadal acknowledged fatigue might have been a factor during his poor play in the tiebreaker, including a double-fault and a flubbed volley.

"Mistakes can happen," the 35-year-old from Spain said. "But if you want to win, you can't make these mistakes."

That set alone lasted 1 hour, 33 minutes, and an 11 p.m. nationwide curfew in place because of COVID-19 was approaching. Djokovic's previous match had been delayed more than 20 minutes while the audience — limited to 5,000 people under coronavirus restrictions — was cleared out of the stadium, but an announcement was made Friday to let everyone know the government agreed to let them stay until the end of the match.

Earlier chants in French of "We won't leave!" were replaced by choruses of the national anthem and cheers of thanks for President Emmanuel Macron.

Nadal noted afterward that playing in the cooler night air meant balls bounced lower, lessening the effect of his lefty forehand's heavy topspin.

"That's more favorable for him, the conditions," Nadal said. "By the way, doesn't matter. That's tennis. The player who (gets) used to the conditions better is the player who (deserves) to win. So no doubt, he

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deserved to win.”

The intensity was palpable from the outset of the evening, and Nadal zoomed to a 5-0 lead, reminiscent of last year’s final, which he won 6-0, 6-2, 7-5. That was only the fourth shutout set lost by Djokovic in 341 career Grand Slam matches up to that point — and the first in a major final.

There wouldn’t be another Friday, because Djokovic made two key tactical adjustments — moving much further back than usual to return serve and deciding to focus on serving toward Nadal’s backhand — and quickly made clear this would be a classic between two of the greatest ever at what they do.

They defended in ways rarely seen. Found the right mix of power and touch. Conjured up impossible-at-first-glance winners that no one else would try, let alone successfully employ. Returned as well as anyone, combining to generate 38 break points.

No two men in the professional era, which dates to 1968, have played each other more than this duo (Djokovic now leads 30-28). They know each other, and each other’s strengths and weaknesses and patterns, so well.

Back-and-forth they went — from game to game, point to point, shot to shot. Through exchanges that lasted 10 strokes, 20 strokes, more, they created marvelous points, too many to count — or recount.

They forced each other to come up with the goods over and over again, in a version of “Can you top this?” And the answer, over and over again, was “Yes!”

Neither would give up or give in.

Djokovic shrugged off his early hole. He saved a set point while down 6-5 in the third. Nadal recovered from the dropped tiebreaker to steal a break at the beginning of the fourth.

But Djokovic broke back to 2-all and was on his way.

“Something clicked,” Djokovic said.

## **AP wins 2 Pulitzers for photos of pandemic pain, US unrest**

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

Associated Press photographers awarded the Pulitzer Prize on Friday had dodged tear gas to capture protests against racial injustice and patiently built trust with elderly people to empathetically document the toll of the coronavirus pandemic.

AP’s chief photographer in Spain, Emilio Morenatti, won the feature photography prize. Work by 10 AP photographers won the breaking news prize.

“The outstanding work of the AP photography staff in covering racial justice protests and Emilio Morenatti’s compassionate, yearlong look at the impact of COVID-19 on the elderly in Spain are two shining examples of what photojournalists strive to do everywhere: use light and shadow to bring knowledge and understanding to all corners of the globe,” said J. David Ake, AP assistant managing editor and director of photography.

Traveling by scooter around Barcelona, Morenatti captured images of an older couple hugging and kissing through a plastic sheet, mortuary workers in hazmat gear removing bodies and of people enduring the crisis in isolation.

Morenatti separated himself from his family for months to avoid the risk of exposure as he documented the toll of COVID-19 on the elderly. He credited half the award to his wife, who took care of their children, and the other half to his colleagues.

“I never thought that I could win the Pulitzer, actually, but much less than I could win at using my electric scooter around a few dozen kilometers from my house in Barcelona,” he said.

Morenatti is a veteran photographer with wide experience in war zones. He was embedded with the U.S. military in southern Afghanistan in August 2009 when the vehicle he was in was hit by a roadside bomb. His left leg was amputated below the knee.

The AP photographers who won in the breaking news category captured the drama and raw emotion of protests that roiled U.S. cities after the May 2020 death of George Floyd, a Black man murdered by a Minneapolis police officer.

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AP photographers captured close-up images of demonstrators with fists in the air and sometimes violent conflicts with police. One widely published photograph by Julio Cortez on the night of May 28 in riot-torn Minneapolis shows a lone, silhouetted protester running with an upside-down American flag past a burning liquor store.

The ten photographers who won the breaking news prize are freelancer Noah Berger, Alex Brandon, freelancer Ringo H.W. Chiu, Cortez, Frank Franklin II, David Goldman, John Minchillo, Marcio Sanchez, Mike Stewart and Evan Vucci.

"It means the world to me to share this with my colleagues," Minchillo said on Twitter. "I hoped for one Pulitzer in a lifetime of hustling and this is how I wanted it. With my people, on the big story."

The AP also had two Pulitzer finalists in the investigative reporting category and an additional finalist for breaking news photography.

The AP's two finalists in the investigative reporting category were for "Fruits of Labor," a series by reporters Margie Mason and Robin McDowell that exposed widespread abuse in the lucrative palm oil industry, and for reporter Dake Kang and AP staff's reporting on China's early mishandling of the coronavirus and human rights violations against the Uyghurs.

AP's Hassan Ammar, Felipe Dana and Hussein Malla were finalists in the breaking news photography for images of the immediate aftermath of the port explosion that leveled part of Beirut.

This is the second year in a row AP has won the Pulitzer for feature photography. AP last won both photography prizes in 1999.

The news cooperative, which is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year, has won 56 Pulitzer Prizes, including 34 for photography.

## Justice Department will review restrictive GOP voting laws

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department will scrutinize a wave of new laws in Republican-controlled states that tighten voting rules, Attorney General Merrick Garland said Friday, vowing to take action on any violations of federal law.

He announced plans to double staffing within the department's civil rights division and said the department would send guidance to states about election-related activity, including mail voting and post-election audits. He also pledged to investigate and prosecute those who would threaten election workers, noting a rise in such cases.

"There are many things open to debate in America, but the right of all eligible citizens to vote is not one of them," Garland said in his first direct response to the restrictive voting laws being passed in more than a dozen states where Republicans control the legislature and governor's office.

Speaking to staff of the agency's civil rights division, he said the resources of the Justice Department must be rededicated to "meet the challenge of the current moment."

His message was clear: The department doesn't plan to stay on the sidelines of the voting battles that have erupted in statehouses across the country. Along with reviewing new state laws, Garland said the department also will examine existing ones for their potential to discriminate against minority voters.

He also reiterated the administration's support for two proposals pushed by congressional Democrats that would create minimum federal standards for voting and would restore the ability of his agency to review changes to state election laws in places with a history of racial discrimination. A 2013 U.S. Supreme Court decision effectively set aside this "preclearance" requirement, and Democrats say it has resulted in a proliferation of restrictive voting laws in recent years.

Garland said false claims of voter fraud were being used to justify the new voting restrictions despite law enforcement and intelligence agencies having refuted those claims. He expressed concern that disinformation surrounding the 2020 election was fueling "abnormal post-election audit methodologies" to conduct partisan ballot reviews, like the one underway in Arizona.

Seven months after the election, former President Donald Trump continues to falsely insist that he won



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and demand that states investigate his unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. Those claims have been resoundingly rejected by state officials who certified the results, judges who dismissed multiple lawsuits filed by Trump and his allies, and a coalition of federal and state officials who called the 2020 election the "most secure" in U.S. history.

Trump's own attorney general said at the time there was no evidence of widespread fraud that would change the outcome.

But Republican state lawmakers in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Texas and elsewhere seized on Trump's claims, pointing to concerns among his supporters as justification for a wave of new bills tightening voting rules. As of mid-May, 22 restrictive laws had passed in at least 14 states, according to the Brennan Center for Justice, which researches voting and supports expanded access.

Republicans in Texas are expected to call for a special session to push through an election overhaul that was derailed by Democrats on the last day of the regular session.

Republicans who support the new laws said action was needed to safeguard voting and restore public confidence in elections.

"Americans have been clear: they support laws making it easy to vote and hard to cheat in states across the country," said Jessica Anderson, executive director of Heritage Action, which has been working to advance the legislative proposals. "Despite the false narrative coming out of the White House and now the Department of Justice, Americans support secure, fair elections, even if the Left does not."

Voting right groups already have filed several lawsuits challenging the laws.

Garland's comments come as the Justice Department is shifting its priorities to focus more on civil rights issues and ensuring equal protection under the law after a tumultuous four years in the Trump administration.

Along with tightening voting rules, Republicans also have pushed measures to expand the role of poll watchers, following complaints that their monitors did not have adequate access during the 2020 election. In Florida, a new law allows each candidate to have one watcher present during canvassing board meetings, which caused concerns about overcrowding and slowing ballot tabulation.

In a bill that eventually failed but is expected to be revived during a special legislative session, Texas Republicans pushed broad new criminal penalties for election workers who impede poll watchers.

Trump's claims also have led Republican state senators in Arizona to use their subpoena power and launch a partisan review of the 2.1 million ballots cast in Maricopa County. The audit will not change the outcome of the election, which was certified by the state's Republican governor after multiple reviews, a standard procedure following every election. But Trump has called for more reviews in other states he lost, including Georgia and Pennsylvania.

The Justice Department has sent a letter expressing concern about the Arizona review, and Garland vowed that his department would ensure any post-election review abides by federal law to "protect election records and avoid the intimidation of voters."

Election experts have pointed to major flaws in the process unfolding in Arizona and said the Republican effort could further erode confidence in the democratic process.

## Stocks notch modest gains and a 3rd winning week for S&P 500

By DAMIAN J. TROISE and ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writers

Wall Street closed out a mostly listless week Friday with a wobbly day of trading that helped nudge the S&P 500 to its third straight weekly gain.

The benchmark index edged up 0.2% after spending much of the day in the red. The small uptick was enough to lift the S&P 500 to an all-time high for the second day in a row.

Technology companies and banks accounted for much of the upward move. The gains were offset by a broad slide in health care, energy and real estate stocks. Bond yields were mixed.

With the exception of select "meme" stocks like GameStop and AMC Entertainment hyped by individual investors in online forums, the broader market was relatively quiet this week. Investors remain in wait-

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and-see mode ahead of the Federal Reserve's upcoming meeting of policymakers Wednesday.

Wall Street is keen for clues about how much of a threat the central bank deems rising inflation as the economy emerges from its pandemic-induced recession, and whether the Fed has begun considering beginning to taper its support for the economy.

"No one is suggesting that it will be at this meeting, but the market is poised for the Fed to at least even tangentially suggest that they're discussing" tapering, said Quincy Krosby, chief market strategist at Prudential Financial.

The S&P 500 rose 8.26 points to 4,247.44. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 13.36 points, or less than 0.1%, to 34,479.60. The Nasdaq gained 49.09 points, or 0.4%, to 14,069.42. The tech-heavy index also notched a weekly gain.

Investors bid up shares in smaller company stocks. The Russell 2000 index picked up 24.40 points, or 1.1%, to 2,335.81. The index is up 18.3% this year, outgaining the S&P 500's advance of 13.1% and the Nasdaq's 9.2% gain.

Among the winning technology and financial stocks were chipmaker Nvidia, which rose 2.3%, and Wells Fargo, which gained 1.3%. Several retailers also rose. V.F. Corp., maker of Vans shoes and other apparel, climbed 4.7% for the biggest gain in the S&P 500, while Gap rose 3.2% and L Brands gained 2.3%.

Traders dumped shares in several health care companies after they issued disappointing development updates. Vertex Pharmaceuticals dropped 11% after telling investors it will end development of a potential treatment for a genetic condition that targets the liver. Incyte fell 5.7% as its potential eczema cream ruxolitinib faces a delayed regulatory review. The two stocks topped the list of decliners in the S&P 500.

Investors were relieved to see Thursday that a much-anticipated report showed that a big rise in consumer-level inflation last month was mostly attributed to temporary factors. That could mean less pressure on the Fed to pull back on its measures supporting the economy.

"You kind of have this notion that worries about inflation from the investor base might have peaked," said Ross Mayfield, investment strategist at Baird.

A significant share of May's rise in consumer prices was tied to the sale of used cars, which is largely attributed to purchases by rental car companies beefing up their fleets as people return to traveling.

Bond yields were mixed Friday, though the yield on the closely watched 10-year Treasury note was trading at 1.46%, down from 1.57% a week ago. Yields have been mostly headed lower this week despite reports showing more strength in the economy and possible signs of inflation.

## Teen who recorded Floyd's arrest, death wins Pulitzer nod

By AMY FORLITI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The teenager who pulled out her cellphone and began recording when she saw George Floyd being pinned to the ground by a Minneapolis police officer was given a special citation by the Pulitzer Prizes on Friday for her video that helped to launch a global movement to protest racial injustice.

Darnella Frazier was cited "for courageously recording the murder of George Floyd, a video that spurred protests against police brutality, around the world, highlighting the crucial role of citizens in journalists' quest for truth and justice," the Pulitzer Prizes said.

Frazier was not giving interviews to the media, her publicist said Friday.

Frazier was 17 when she recorded the arrest and death of Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, on May 25, 2020. She testified at the trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin that she was walking to a corner grocery store to get snacks with her then-9-year-old cousin when she saw a man being pinned to the pavement, "terrified, scared, begging for his life."

She said she didn't want her cousin to see what was happening so she ushered the girl into the store then went back out to the sidewalk and began recording because "it wasn't right. He was suffering. He was in pain." She kept recording even though she said she felt threatened when Chauvin ignored the cries of bystanders and pulled out his Mace as he knelt on Floyd's neck for 9 minutes, 29 seconds.

Her video, which shows Floyd repeatedly saying he couldn't breathe before going limp, was posted to

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Facebook hours after it was recorded, sparking outrage in Minneapolis and beyond. It was also a prominent piece of evidence in Chauvin's trial. Chauvin was convicted in April of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and manslaughter. He will be sentenced June 25.

The Pulitzer Board also announced Friday that the Star Tribune of Minneapolis won the breaking news reporting prize for its coverage of Floyd's murder and its aftermath.

Roy Peter Clark, a senior scholar at the Poynter Institute, said in a column for Nieman Lab last month that Frazier should win a Pulitzer for her video. Clark, who has been a Pulitzer juror five times, told The Associated Press on Friday that Frazier was like the many journalists or artists who have won Pulitzer Prizes for standing up for tolerance, equality and social justice.

"There she was, at 17, sort of witnessing an injustice and she stood there in the face of threats and captured that video," he said, adding, "It would be hard to select, even from the work of professional journalists over recent years or decades, a 10-minute video that had as profound an impact as this young woman's video did."

Frazier's video was "globe shaking," spoke truth to power and gave a voice to the voiceless, Clark said.

It's unusual but not unprecedented for the Pulitzer Board to award citizens who capture news events; the famous photo of a firefighter cradling an infant after the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing was taken by Charles Porter IV, a bank credit officer, and distributed by the AP.

Clark said the special citation that Frazier received recognizes exceptional work that falls outside specific award categories. The honor puts Frazier on a list with Ida B. Wells, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, and the staff of the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland, for their response to a 2018 shooting in their newsroom.

Frazier was also given the PEN/Benenson Courage Award last year by PEN America, a literary and human rights organization.

PEN America CEO Suzanne Nossel said at the time: "With nothing more than a cellphone and sheer guts, Darnella changed the course of history in this country, sparking a bold movement demanding an end to systemic anti-Black racism and violence at the hands of police."

During her testimony at Chauvin's trial, Frazier told jurors that she sometimes wishes she had done more to help Floyd. She said she looks at her father and other Black men in her life and thinks about "how that could have been one of them."

"It's been nights I stayed up, apologizing and apologizing to George Floyd for not doing more, and not physically interacting and not saving his life," she testified, adding of Chauvin: "But it's like, it's not what I should've done, it's what he should've done."

The three other officers involved in Floyd's arrest are scheduled to face trial next year on aiding and abetting counts. All four officers are also charged with violating Floyd's civil rights.

## Some J&J vaccine doses can be used, but many must be tossed

By LINDA A. JOHNSON and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

U.S. regulators are allowing the release of about 10 million doses of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine from a troubled Baltimore factory, but many more doses can't be used and must be thrown out.

The Food and Drug Administration announced Friday that it had determined that two batches could be released from the plant, which is owned by Emergent BioSolutions and has been shuttered for eight weeks. But it said several other batches are not suitable for use and additional batches are still under review.

The agency wouldn't specify the size of those batches or why they can't be used, but a person familiar with the decision told The Associated Press that they could have yielded tens of millions of doses and that they possibly were contaminated. Another person familiar with the situation said the doses to be discarded were made about the same time as a vaccine batch equal to about 15 million doses that was contaminated earlier this year and thrown out.

Neither person was authorized to release details about the decision and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

J&J and Emergent wouldn't give any details on the size of the batches that are usable, nor those being

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discarded.

The two batches from the factory known as Bayview can be used in the U.S. or exported to other countries. They are the first J&J vaccines from Bayview approved for use.

The FDA said if any of the vaccine is exported, J&J and Emergent must allow the agency to share information about the manufacture of those batches confidentially with regulators in other countries.

The FDA statement implied that the batches didn't meet all of the agency's manufacturing quality standards. "This review has been taking place while Emergent BioSolutions prepares to resume manufacturing operations with corrective actions to ensure compliance with the FDA's" manufacturing requirements, Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said in a statement.

The agency said the vaccines are "critically needed," given the current public health emergency, and that it made the decisions after reviewing records and the results of quality testing.

The FDA, however, stopped short of allowing the plant to restart vaccine production. The agency said it was working through issues there with J&J and Emergent BioSolutions management.

Emergent is one of several J&J contractors that produce its one-shot vaccine in bulk. The concentrated vaccine then is shipped to other factories for final steps, including diluting them to the correct strength, putting them in vials and packaging them up.

Roughly 100 million doses made from bulk vaccine produced at Emergent's factory, including those just approved for use, had been set aside for additional review by FDA staff after factory employees accidentally contaminated an earlier batch.

That contamination led the FDA to shut down the factory in mid-April and send in a team of inspectors. They spent a week going through the factory and reviewing security camera footage that showed employees carelessly handling vaccine materials. The inspectors reported unsanitary conditions, poorly trained employees and other problems.

The lapses have hampered J&J's efforts to be a major player in vaccinating people, particularly in remote areas and poor countries, given that it's the only drugmaker with an authorized vaccine that only requires one dose and standard refrigeration. It's also cheaper than some other vaccines.

The production problems have forced J&J to import millions of doses from its factory in the Netherlands to the U.S. and to miss supply commitments.

Emergent's factory had a history of FDA citations for problems including mold, dirty walls and floors, poorly trained employees and an inadequate strategy to prevent contamination, yet it was given a huge role in COVID-19 vaccine production by the Trump administration. Emergent was handed a lucrative contract to make many millions of COVID-19 vaccines for both J&J and AstraZeneca at the Bayview factory.

Emergent's chief executive has blamed the contamination and other problems on the complexity of scaling up the factory in just months to make two different vaccines.

The Biden administration is working to find a different American manufacturing partner for the British drugmaker, which has yet to request authorization to distribute it in the U.S.

## **Pulitzers honor coronavirus pandemic, US protest coverage**

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

The Associated Press won two Pulitzer Prizes in photography Friday for its coverage of the racial injustice protests and the coronavirus's terrible toll on the elderly, while The New York Times received the public service award for its detailed, data-filled reporting on the pandemic.

In a year dominated by COVID-19 and furious debate over race and policing, the Star Tribune of Minneapolis won the breaking news reporting prize for its coverage of George Floyd's murder and its aftermath, while Darnella Frazier — the teenager who recorded the killing on a cellphone — received a special citation.

Frazier's award was intended to highlight "the crucial role of citizens in journalists' quest for truth and justice," the Pulitzer Board said.

The AP and The New York Times each won two Pulitzers, the most prestigious prize in journalism, first awarded in 1917.

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The feature photography prize went to AP's chief photographer in Spain, Emilio Morenatti, who captured haunting images of an older couple embracing through a plastic sheet, mortuary workers in hazmat gear removing bodies, and people enduring the crisis in isolation.

The breaking news photography prize was shared by 10 AP photographers for their coverage of the protests set off by Floyd's killing. One widely published photograph by Julio Cortez on the night of May 28 in riot-torn Minneapolis showed a lone, silhouetted protester running with an upside-down American flag past a burning liquor store.

"Everybody, not just myself, has given up something to go cover this stuff," Cortez said. "To be an illegal immigrant kid who now has a piece of the AP history is just insane. I'm just super proud of everyone's work."

AP President and CEO Gary Pruitt said the two prizes are a "true testament to the talent and dedication of AP photojournalists." He added: "These photographers told the stories of the year through remarkable and unforgettable images that resonated around the world."

The New York Times received its public service prize for pandemic coverage that the judges said was "courageous, prescient and sweeping" and "filled a data vacuum" that helped better prepare the public. Wesley Morris of the Times won for criticism, for his writing on the intersection of race and culture.

Similarly, the prize for commentary went to Michael Paul Williams of the Richmond Times-Dispatch in Virginia for a series of columns on dismantling Confederate monuments in Richmond following Floyd's death.

And Star Tribune journalists were honored for covering the rage in Minneapolis, where protesters burned buildings, including a police station, in the wake of Floyd's death. The Black man died after a white Minneapolis police officer pinned him to the ground with his knee on Floyd's neck for up to 9 1/2 minutes. The officer was later convicted of murder.

"Our staff poured its heart and soul into covering this story. It has been such a traumatic and tragic time for our community," Star Tribune Editor Rene Sanchez said in a statement. "We felt that our journalism had to capture the full truth and depth of this pain and the many questions it renewed about Minnesota and the country."

Prizes for explanatory reporting went to two recipients. Ed Yong of The Atlantic won for a series of deeply reported articles about the pandemic. Andrew Chung, Lawrence Hurley, Andrea Januta, Jaimi Dowdell and Jackie Botts of Reuters were honored for a look at the legal concept of qualified immunity and how it shields police from prosecution.

Two prizes for feature writing were also awarded. Nadja Drost won for her freelance piece on global migration in The California Sunday Magazine, which suspended publication late last year. And freelance contributor Mitchell S. Jackson won for an account in Runner's World on the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man who was chased down and shot while jogging in Georgia.

The national reporting prize went to the staffs of The Marshall Project, AL.com, IndyStar and the Invisible Institute for an investigation into attacks on people by police K-9 units around the country.

BuzzFeed News won its first Pulitzer, in international reporting, for a series by Megha Rajagopalan, Alison Killing and Christo Buschek on the infrastructure built by the Chinese government for the mass detention of Muslims.

Also, BuzzFeed News and the International Consortium of Journalists were finalists in that category for an expose on the global banking industry's role in money laundering. A former U.S. Treasury Department employee was sentenced to six months in prison this month for leaking the trove of confidential financial reports that served as the basis for the series.

Matt Rocheleau, Vernal Coleman, Laura Crimaldi, Evan Allen and Brendan McCarthy of The Boston Globe received the investigative reporting Pulitzer for a series demonstrating the systematic failure by state governments to share information about dangerous truck drivers.

McCarthy, the editor on the series, said the Globe "quickly found that this kind of tragedy had been happening year after year for decades. The problems were in plain sight but had never been addressed."

The winner of the public service Pulitzer is honored with a gold medal. The awards in the other categories carry a prize of \$15,000 each. The prizes are administered by Columbia University.

## US vaccine surplus grows by the day as expiration dates loom

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

In Tennessee and North Carolina, demand for the COVID-19 vaccine has slowed down so much that they have given millions of doses back to the federal government, even though less than half of their total populations are vaccinated.

Oklahoma has not asked for new doses from the government for more than a month, spurning its 200,000-a-week allotment. Around the country, states are rushing to use up doses before they expire this summer.

The U.S. is confronted with an ever-growing surplus of coronavirus vaccine, looming expiration dates and stubbornly lagging demand at a time when the developing world is clamoring for doses to stem a rise in infections.

Million-dollar prizes, free beer and marijuana, raffled-off hunting rifles and countless other giveaways around the country have failed to significantly move the needle on vaccine hesitancy, raising the specter of new outbreaks.

The stockpiles are becoming more daunting each week. Oklahoma has more than 700,000 doses on shelves but is administering only 4,500 a day and has 27,000 Pfizer and Moderna doses that are set to expire at the end of the month.

Millions of Johnson & Johnson doses nationwide were set to expire this month before the government extended their dates by six weeks, but some leaders acknowledge it will be difficult to use them up even by then.

"We really cannot let doses expire. That would be a real outrage, given the need to get vaccines to some under-vaccinated communities in the U.S. and the glaring gap in vaccinations and the inequity of vaccinations that we have globally," said Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, chair of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of California, San Francisco.

The U.S. averaged about 870,000 new injections per day at the end of last week, down sharply from a high of about 3.3 million a day on average in mid-April, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

President Joe Biden wants to have 70% of the adult U.S. population at least partially vaccinated by July 4. But the U.S. could well fail to meet that target. As of Friday, 64% of Americans 18 and older had had at least one dose, by the CDC's count.

Some states, especially in the Northeast, have already reached that 70% goal for adults, while places like Mississippi and Alabama are nowhere close. Mississippi, in fact, has been transferring large quantities of vaccine to other states and the federal government.

Amid the glut, the White House has announced plans to share 80 million doses globally by the end of June and also buy 500 million more doses of the Pfizer vaccine and donate them to 92 lower-income countries and the African Union over the next year.

With demand stronger in Maine and Rhode Island, the two states received 32,400 doses each from Mississippi, where only about one-third of the state is at least partially vaccinated. Mississippi has also transferred 800,000 doses to a federal vaccine pool. The state has seen demand plunge to levels not seen since the opening weeks of the vaccine rollout, with only 18,400 doses administered there this week.

Mississippi State Health Officer Dr. Thomas Dobbs said Friday that the state health department was more than happy to help states in the Northeast.

"In Mississippi, if people don't understand how important it is to keep alive, we want to protect other Americans," he said.

Each week, states are allotted a number of doses from the government and are allowed to order shots from that. But more states, including Oklahoma, Alabama, Utah, Delaware and New Hampshire, have stopped placing orders for new doses in recent weeks because they have such a large inventory. That has added to the ballooning federal stockpile.

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Those skipping the vaccine include Benjamin Schlink of Pearl, Mississippi, who said he believes he is healthy enough to fight the illness.

"The way I look at it, I don't worry about it, because God is in control," he said. "If God wants you to have it, you'll have it."

Gayle Charnley, 69, said some of her neighbors in the small town think she should get the shot, but she is not planning on it. "They're just forcing them on people as fast as they can get them, and we don't know what the long-term effects are going to be," she said.

Hundreds of millions of vaccine doses have been administered around the world with intense safety monitoring, and few serious risks have been identified.

Some of the demand slowdown is a natural part of the rollout process. In Massachusetts, 68% of people have a first dose and the mass vaccination sites are shutting down as officials shift to harder-to-reach places, such as drug treatment centers.

Demand has been especially low for the J&J vaccine, a one-shot, easy-to-store formula that held great promise because of its convenience but whose rollout has been hurt by links to a rare blood clot disorder and contamination problems at a Baltimore factory.

Bibbins-Domingo said that with many parts of the world desperate for doses, the U.S. has a moral obligation not to waste the J&J formula, which is especially useful in remote areas, among people who are homeless and in rural communities.

"At all costs, we need to make sure that those doses get to people who can use them," she said.

In West Virginia, demand has nearly dropped off completely for the J&J vaccine. About 42% of the total population there has gotten at least one dose.

That's in spite of a sweepstakes raffling off everything from cash to hunting rifles to pickup trucks. When Ohio kicked off a trend of million-dollar prize drawings a few weeks ago, officials saw a robust 43% increase in vaccination numbers — but only for the first week.

In North Carolina, \$25 cash cards helped bring people to vaccine clinics, but even so, the state isn't ordering any new doses from the government for the second week in a row.

Instead, the state has given back 1.2 million doses. In Tennessee, 2.4 million have been returned to the federal pool. It's a disappointing development to William Schaffner, a professor of preventive medicine at Vanderbilt University's medical school in Nashville.

"If the governor is not making an impassioned plea — and ours hasn't — then I look to local leaders of every kind," he said.

In Colorado, which has given over 175,000 back to the federal pool, there's a million-dollar lottery, and drag queens have begun beckoning people at clinics during Pride Month. In New Mexico, the nation's biggest lottery grand prize, \$5 million, halted a downward trend in vaccinations and may have even caused a slight improvement, officials said. Washington state allowed marijuana stores to offer free joints this week.

While incentive programs may not have sent vaccination rates soaring, they are still a worthwhile tool for states working through the difficult "last mile" of a marathon, said Dr. Nirav Shah, head of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and president of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers.

About one-quarter of the hundreds of people who responded to North Carolina's cash-card giveaway said it was key to their decision to get the shot that day.

"If states are able to prevent chains of transmission that would have otherwise landed people in the ICU on a ventilator, missing weeks of work, keeping their family out of school, if we can avoid a handful of those incidents, then these programs will have been worth it," Shah said.

Several states aren't ordering new vaccines from the government, including Alabama, Delaware, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Utah, and Oklahoma. Other states, such as Iowa and Nevada, are still ordering new doses but in dramatically reduced amounts.

Still, Shah said the nation's vaccine rollout is moving much more quickly than he expected, and he welcomed efforts to expand distribution to hard-pressed regions like Africa.

"One of the things that the pandemic has illustrated is that we are not safe, as a state, as a country, as a

globe, until everywhere is safe," he said. "We should be doing our part to vaccinate everyone in the globe."

## Nevada schools reckon with race, triggering polarization

By SAM METZ AP / Report for America

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Nevada has become the latest flashpoint in a national debate over how to teach students about racism and its role in U.S. history, with parents clashing over curriculum proposals.

People wore MAGA hats and waved signs outside a packed school board meeting this week in Reno, while trustees considered expanding K-5 curriculum to include more teaching about equity, diversity and racism.

Opponents say the proposal would lead to the teaching of "critical race theory," which seeks to reframe the narrative of American history. Critics say such lesson plans teach students to hate the United States.

A conservative group even suggested outfitting teachers with body cameras to ensure they aren't indoctrinating children with such lessons.

"You guys have a serious problem with activist teachers pushing politics in the classroom, and there's no place for it, especially for our fifth graders," Karen England, Nevada Family Alliance executive director, told Washoe County School District trustees Tuesday.

District officials there and in Carson City, where a similar debate is playing out, say critical race theory is not part of their plans.

The clashes mirror fights underway throughout the U.S.

In GOP-controlled statehouses, lawmakers have passed measures prohibiting the teaching of critical race theory, a reaction to the nation's racial reckoning after last year's police killing of George Floyd.

Nevada has bucked that trend. Gov. Steve Sisolak signed legislation this week to add multicultural education to social studies curriculum standards and teach students about the historic contributions of members of additional racial and ethnic groups.

Dr. Jonathan Moore, deputy superintendent of Nevada's education agency, said the laws clarified social studies "content themes," which already included concepts like social justice and diversity. The standards do not include critical race theory, which draws a line from slavery and segregation to contemporary inequities and argues racism remains embedded in laws and institutions.

Meanwhile, the Black mother of a mixed-race student is suing a Las Vegas charter school over a "Sociology of Change" course that covers the concept of privilege as it pertains to race, gender and sexual orientation.

In Reno, the Washoe County School District arranged overflow rooms and set up loudspeakers outside Tuesday's school board meeting to accommodate a large crowd.

Opponents gathered outside carrying signs that read "No CRT," "CRT teaches racism" and "The School Board works for the people!"

"You say there's no CRT (critical race theory) in this curriculum," Sparks resident Bruce Parks told trustees. "It is being taught in our schools right now. When you use words and language like 'white male privilege,' 'systemic racism,' that's straight out of CRT."

On the other side of the entrance, students, parents and teachers wore green T-shirts and carried signs with slogans including "Amplify Student Voices" to signify support for "Washoe County School District Students for Change," a group that has pushed for curriculum additions.

"These are systemic issues, and they've been here for a long time. But I think the protests last year really gave light to how divided people were and how polarized people were," said Michael Arreygue, a college student who attended Washoe County schools. "There's people who don't want to acknowledge that these problems exist — that there is systemic racism and injustice."

Superintendent Kristen McNeill recommended the district form a task force to review curriculum instead of implementing the plan. The board approved the task force on Wednesday.

In Carson City, a proposal to incorporate concepts like equity into the strategic plan raised concerns about how schools broach the topic of race.

At a Tuesday school board meeting, parent Jason Tingle said he was worried when he heard talk about critical race theory in schools.



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But he reviewed district materials and concluded the fears were unfounded.

"I've yet to see anything in the curriculum that shows that we are actually going to take a hardcore approach to critical race theory," said Tingle, who has four children enrolled in district schools.

"Until our kids come home and show us something different or tell us something different, then we should keep our faith in the school district and let them do what they were sent here to do."

Sam Metz is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

## California selects another 15 winners in vaccine lottery

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California selected another 15 people on Friday to win \$50,000 each just for getting the coronavirus vaccine amid hopes from state officials that the chance of winning big money will convince skeptics to get inoculated ahead of the state's broad reopening next week.

The lottery-style drawing selected winners from the nearly 22 million Californians who have received at least one dose of the coronavirus vaccine. State officials identified the winners by what county they lived in, with plans to contact them in the coming days.

Fifteen other people won the prize last week. But state officials could not reach two of them. The two were replaced by alternate winners in Sacramento and Monterey counties, Gov. Gavin Newsom said.

In addition to the \$50,000 prizes, the state has pledged to give \$50 gift cards to 2 million people who get vaccinated.

But the big prize will be handed out on Tuesday, when Newsom will oversee a drawing where 10 people will win \$1.5 million each. Newsom has said that on that same day he will lift the state's stay-at-home order and end most restrictions on businesses — including allowing fully vaccinated people to stop wearing masks under most circumstances.

One of last week's \$50,000 winners was 17-year-old Nancy Gutierrez, who is about to finish her junior year of high school in the San Diego area. Newsom indicated the money would go into a savings account because Gutierrez is under 18.

"My only advice: Don't spend all that money. Invest it in your future and in your mind," Newsom told her during a news conference in Vista, California, that was streamed on the governor's social media channels.

Gutierrez appeared with Newsom at the news conference, smiling while holding a microphone and answering questions from the governor as he acted like a game-show host for the second week in a row. Gutierrez said she and her family initially did not believe the news that she had won and encouraged everyone to get vaccinated.

"I think most of us want life to go like back to normal and getting the vaccine would definitely help that," she said.

Newsom said California has administered nearly 40 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine and that 70% of the state's adult residents have received at least one dose.

Newsom said it would be "challenging" to for the state to achieve a rate of 75% to 80% of California residents vaccinated with one dose, but that he believes the prize money has been an effective incentive.

Newsom said the state administered 1.43 million doses over the past week, an increase from the fewer than 1 million doses that were given out the week before.

"Just a handful of states can lay claim to seeing week over week increases in vaccination doses being administered," he said. "We're here to celebrate that."

## Booing of anti-racism gesture reinforces need to take a knee

By ROB HARRIS AP Global Soccer Writer

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BURTON-ON-TRENT, England (AP) — What should be the perfect opening to England's European Championship campaign — in its home stadium on a scorching summer afternoon — instead carries an element of trepidation about the reception the players will receive from their own fans.

When players took a knee before both Euro 2020 warm-up games, the response from sections of England fans was booing.

The disregard of the reasons for performing the anti-racism gesture has created a disconnect with many soccer fans viewing it as a political act.

Ahead of England's Group D opener against Croatia on Sunday at Wembley Stadium there has even been an intervention, albeit delayed, from Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office.

"The prime minister wants to see everybody getting behind the team to cheer them on, not boo," the message said.

The England team appears to be frustrated for continually having to explain why they want to take a knee, as they have done in the Premier League for a year as part of calls to eradicate racial injustice following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

"Honestly, it's something I didn't even really want to speak on," England forward Raheem Sterling said at the team's St. George's Park team base. "If you can't understand the meaning behind it and the cause behind it, then it's a real disappointment to see that."

During team meetings, England players have remained unwavering in their determination to take a knee.

"We believe in that," said defender Luke Shaw, who is white, "and we won't stop."

Last year, center back Tyrone Mings helped the English Football Association create a code to increase gender and ethnic diversity in coaching and senior leadership positions by setting targets for recruitment.

"Whether that message gets through to the minority or not is something we should not ever give up on," Mings said. "I will speak about it until the day that I pass away. I am a strong advocate for trying to educate people who might not understand issues they have been subjected to."

There is no unified public position from the fans jeering their own players, but some have tried to link taking a knee with a political agenda.

Yet the England games — like those against Austria and Romania in Middlesbrough, where players were booed for taking a knee — also see the line "No surrender" inserted by a large section of fans during the national anthem, a dated reference to the conflict endured for generations that saw Britain hit by Irish Republic Army terrorist attacks.

"If you are booing an anti-racist gesture in England then you do stand accused of being racist," said Piara Powar, executive director of the anti-discrimination group Fare network.

"This argument they there are booing the Black Lives Matter movement organization doesn't wash really," Powar said. "They don't like the fact the identity of England is changing and the gesture such as taking a knee, which actually is a sporting gesture, has made its way into football."

It was also booed by Hungary fans when Ireland players kneeled during a friendly match on Tuesday — a move defended by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

"Politics has no place in sports," Orbán said.

The Scotland team had initially decided not to kneel during games at Euro 2020 but on Friday said it would when it goes to Wembley next Friday for the second group game against England.

"Our stance is that everyone, players, fans, teams, clubs, federations, governing bodies and governments, must do more," Scotland captain Andy Robertson said. "Meaningful action is needed if meaningful change is to occur. But it is also clear, given the events around the England national team, taking the knee in this tournament matters as a symbol of solidarity."

Kick It Out, the English game's anti-discrimination group, and the Football Supporters' Association have called on fans at Wembley to drown out any booing with cheers.

"Fans who turn up to support the England team and make their first act after the referee's whistle booing their own team's stance against racism, should be ashamed of themselves," FSA chief executive Kevin Miles said.

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England coach Gareth Southgate has made clear his players won't "just stick to football" if their platform can be used to achieve change in society.

"It's their duty to continue to interact with the public on matters such as equality, inclusivity and racial injustice, while using the power of their voices to help put debates on the table, raise awareness and educate," Southgate wrote in a letter to fans published by The Players' Tribune.

## Law enforcement struggles to recruit since killing of Floyd

By STEFANIE DAZIO, JAKE BLEIBERG and KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

Law enforcement agencies across the country experienced a wave of retirements and departures and are struggling to recruit the next generation of police officers in the year since George Floyd was killed by a cop.

And amid the national reckoning on policing, communities are questioning who should become a police officer today.

Mass protests and calls for reforming or defunding the police, as well as the coronavirus pandemic, took their toll on officer morale. The rate of retirements at some departments rose 45% compared with the previous year, according to new research on nearly 200 law enforcement agencies conducted by the Washington-based Police Executive Research Forum and provided to The Associated Press. At the same time, hiring slowed by 5%, the group found.

The wave comes as local lawmakers have pledged to enact reforms — such as ending the policies that give officers immunity for their actions while on-duty — and say they're committed to reshaping policing in the 21st century. And recruiters are increasingly looking for a different kind of recruit to join embattled departments.

Years ago, a candidate's qualifications might be centered around his — yes, his — brawn. Now, police departments say they are seeking recruits who can use their brain. And they want those future officers to represent their communities.

"Days of old, you wanted someone who actually had the strength to be more physical," Atlanta Police Chief Rodney Bryant said. "Today's police officers, that's not what we're looking for. We're looking for someone who can actually relate to the community but also think like the community thinks."

But the climate today, coupled with increases in crime in some cities, is creating what Chuck Wexler, the head of the Police Executive Research Forum, called a "combustible mixture."

It's creating "a crisis on the horizon for police chiefs when they look at the resources they need, especially during a period when we're seeing an increase in murders and shootings," Wexler said. "It's a wake-up call."

The data from Wexler's organization represents a fraction of the more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide and is not representative of all departments. But it's one of the few efforts to examine police hiring and retention and compare it with the time before Floyd's killing in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020. Former officer Derek Chauvin, who pressed his knee on Floyd's neck while Floyd was handcuffed behind his back, was convicted of murder and is awaiting sentencing.

Researchers heard from 194 police departments last month about their hires, resignations and retirements between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, and the same categories from April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

By comparison, the changing public attitude on policing is well documented. In the past year, as many as half of American adults believed police violence against the public is a "very" or "extremely" serious problem, according to one poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

"It's hard to recruit the very people who see police as an opposition," said Lynda R. Williams, president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, who previously worked on recruitment efforts for the Secret Service.

Bryant knows firsthand. In the weeks after Floyd's death, a white officer, Garrett Rolfe, shot and killed Rayshard Brooks, a Black man, in the parking lot of a Wendy's.

In quick succession, Rolfe was fired, the chief resigned and the local district attorney announced charges, including felony murder, against Rolfe — a rare step in police shootings. Some cops left the force, which

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currently has about 1,560 officers — about 63% of the force is Black, 29% white and 5% Latino.

Then came the “Blue Flu” — when a high number of police officers called out sick in protest. Bryant, then the department’s interim chief, acknowledged that it had occurred in Atlanta after Rolfe was charged.

“Some are angry. Some are fearful. Some are confused on what we do in this space. Some may feel a bit abandoned,” Bryant said last summer in an interview at the height of the crisis.

But it hasn’t shaken the resolve of some, like Kaley Garced, a hairdresser-turned-police officer in Baltimore who graduated from the academy last August. Despite the protests and attitudes toward law enforcement, she stayed with her career choice with a plan to interact with residents.

“Earning their trust” leads to better policing, she said. Citizens who trust officers will not be afraid to “call upon you on their worst day” and ask for help.

Williams said she believes the next generation of law enforcement will bring a new outlook and move the profession forward by making departments more diverse and inclusive.

“They are the change that they want to see,” Williams said.

Recruitment is still a challenge. In some cities like Philadelphia, departments are spending more time scouring a candidate’s social media to hunt for possible biases. In others, pay disparities — a longtime problem — still exist, making it difficult to attract would-be officers and keep newly trained recruits when a neighboring jurisdiction offers more money and benefits.

In Dallas, city leaders spent much of the last decade struggling to draw candidates and stem the outflow of officers frustrated by low pay and the near collapse of their pension fund.

Despite those efforts, the force now stands at about 3,100 officers — down from more than 3,300 in 2015 — a loss at a time when the city’s population has grown to more than 1.3 million. The force is about 44% white, 26% Black and 26% Latino. This means officers handle more calls and detectives more cases, all amid increased racial tension.

In 2016, five officers were killed in Dallas by a sniper who was seeking revenge for police shootings elsewhere that killed or wounded Black men. Two years later, an off-duty officer fatally shot her neighbor in his home. She was fired and later was sentenced to a decade in prison for murder.

Mike Mata, president of the Dallas Police Association, said the national political climate and local pay and pension issues have been compounding challenges to hiring in Dallas.

In 2019, however, a consulting firm Dallas hired to review its department found that it needed not simply more officers but also a “realignment of strategy, goals, mission, and tactics.” That finding rings true to Changa Higgins, a longtime community organizer.

“You don’t need to focus on hiring more officers,” Higgins said. “You need to focus on how you got these guys allocated.”

In Los Angeles, the department is fighting against a decade-long image of scandal and racial strife from the Watts riots in 1965 to the bloodshed in 1992 after a Simi Valley jury’s acquittal of officers who brutally beat motorist Rodney King.

Capt. Aaron McCraney, head of the Recruitment and Employment Division, and Chief Michel Moore ticked off the issues facing the 48 new recruits — more than half of whom were women — last year, noting that the pandemic, civil unrest and economic uncertainty were just some of the challenges the new officers would face.

“Even though these are tough times, these are difficult times, these are interesting times,” McCraney said, “these times will pass, and we’ll get on to things better.”

## Racial tensions simmer as Southern Baptists hold key meeting

By DAVID CRARY, TRAVIS LOLLER and PETER SMITH Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Race-related tensions within the Southern Baptist Convention are high heading into a national meeting next week. The election of a new SBC president and debate over the concept of systemic racism may prove pivotal for some Black pastors as they decide whether to stay in the denomination or leave.

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It could be a watershed moment for America's largest Protestant denomination. The SBC was founded before the Civil War as a defender of slavery, and only in 1995 did it formally apologize for that legacy — yet since 2000 its Black membership has been increasing while white membership declines.

Over the past year, however, several Black pastors have exited the SBC in frustration over what they see as racial insensitivity within its overwhelmingly white leadership.

Depending on the outcome at the meeting in Nashville, the exodus could swell — or subside. Many Black pastors are comfortable with the SBC's conservative theology and grateful for financial support, but do not want it to wade into conservative national politics or distance itself from the quest for racial justice.

The Rev. Nate Bishop of Forest Baptist Church near Louisville, Kentucky, said some members of his Black congregation want to leave the SBC while others want to stay, and he intends to assess the "tenor and tone" of deliberations in Nashville to guide his decisions.

"There's a bigger question going on — will there even be an SBC in the next five, 10, 15 years?" Bishop said. "There's going to be a move away from this national organization. The only way forward is going to be if we reject the fear-mongering that's being projected day after day."

One of the SBC's most prominent Black pastors, Dwight McKissic of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, said his church will quit the SBC if either of two leading conservative candidates wins the presidency: Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, or Mike Stone, a pastor from Blackshear, Georgia, whose core supporters view Mohler as insufficiently conservative.

Both "have made statements that Black Baptists would find anathema, regarding racial matters and politics," McKissic said via email. "I could not proudly call myself a Southern Baptist if either of them wins."

He also criticized them for supporting tight restrictions on women's roles in the church, saying he and many other Black pastors favor letting women serve as assistant pastors or in other meaningful roles.

McKissic is endorsing a third candidate, white pastor Ed Litton of Redemption Church in Saraland, Alabama. Litton will be nominated by Fred Luter, a New Orleans-based pastor who in 2012 became the SBC's first and so far only Black president.

A crucial dividing line in the presidential election and for the SBC overall is the issue of critical race theory, a term used to describe critiques of systemic racism.

Last year Mohler and the five other SBC seminary presidents, all of them white, declared that critical race theory is "incompatible with" the SBC's Scripture-based theology.

The statement created friction far beyond SBC academia, particularly due to lack of Black involvement in its drafting. But Mohler hasn't budged from his repudiation of critical race theory, and Stone has harshly condemned the concept.

A resolution endorsed by Stone and many of his key allies, to be proposed at the meeting, denounces critical race theory as "rooted in Neo-Marxist and postmodern worldviews." Stone's allies also will seek to rescind a 2019 resolution suggesting that critical race theory could be useful as an analytical tool.

McKissic said approval of any such measures might be another trigger for his exit.

Last December he, Litton and Luter were among the co-signers of a statement by a multiethnic group of Southern Baptists asserting that systemic racial injustice is a reality.

"Some recent events have left many brothers and sisters of color feeling betrayed and wondering if the SBC is committed to racial reconciliation," the statement said.

Relatively few of the SBC's remaining Black pastors have echoed McKissic's explicit threats to leave.

Luter, as part of a recent video series titled "Why I Stay," said the sometimes-hostile environment within the SBC made it all the more important for Black pastors to stay and seek improvements. The Rev. Marshal Ausberry, who heads the SBC's association of Black churches, has urged respectful dialogue to resolve race-related differences.

Charles Jones, pastor of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Clute, Texas, has chosen to keep his small Black congregation in the Southern Baptists' Texas affiliate — the Baptist General Convention of Texas — in part because of the opportunity for his church to support missionary programs.

Other churches have benefited from SBC ties for things like funding to construct a new building or the convention's ministry certification programs.

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Jones considers the debate over critical race theory a distraction that lets people avoid serious discussions of social inequalities.

"They don't want to talk about schools, about why ghettos are ghettos," Jones said. "We debate theory after theory, and nothing gets done."

The debate flared last year just as the SBC was releasing statistics showing that African Americans have been a primary source of growth within the denomination since 2000, even as white membership steadily declined.

As of 2018 the SBC had about 907,000 African American members out of a total membership of 14.8 million, and roughly 3,900 predominantly Black congregations out of about 51,500.

Asian American and Hispanic participation also increased, prompting Ronnie Floyd, president of the SBC's Executive Committee, to hail America's diversity as "an amazing opportunity" for future growth.

The statistical report didn't say how many African American congregations are dually aligned with historically Black Baptist denominations. As self-governing entities, Baptist churches can choose which groups to affiliate with and decide how much or how little to participate and donate.

The Rev. Joel Bowman Sr., senior pastor of Temple of Faith Baptist Church in Louisville, said his African American church maintains ties to Southern Baptists at the state and local level, but plans to sever its nominal ties with the national convention.

"The SBC to me is not currently a safe place for African Americans and other people of color," he said. "There are probably a number of churches and pastors who would leave the SBC, but because they're so financially tied to the denomination, they're probably slower to leave."

Another Louisville pastor, Deryk Hayes of St. Paul Baptist Church @ Shively Heights, withdrew from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary this year. He cited a lack of respect for the Black church, including a decision to retain the names of its slaveholding founders on some seminary buildings.

"From my perspective, these men aren't heroic," Hayes said. "They were practicing heresy."

Hayes said many Black pastors share the theological conservatism of their white counterparts, but not their politics.

"The conservative resurgence is fine if it's really about biblical inerrancy," he said. "I think it's about male white privilege and male white power."

John Onwuchekwa, pastor of Cornerstone Church in Atlanta, was a rising star in the SBC before breaking with it last year. Among his reasons: He didn't want to be held out as an example for other Black ministers to prove the SBC would be a good place for them.

"There's no doubt in my mind that there are good people in the SBC," Onwuchekwa said. But when opportunities arose to make major improvements in race relations, "instead they take moderate baby steps to not offend the base."

## Summer camps return but with fewer campers and counselors

By CEDAR ATTANASIO and DAVID SHARP Associated Press/Report for America

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Overnight summer camps will be allowed in all 50 states this season, but COVID-19 rules and a pandemic labor crunch mean that many fewer young campers will attend, and those who do will have to observe coronavirus precautions for the second consecutive year.

The Southeast is the first region to kick off camps this month, with other parts of the country to follow in July.

"Camp might look a little different, but camp is going to look a lot better in 2021 than it did in 2020, when it didn't happen," said Matt Norman of Atlanta, who is getting ready to send his 12-year-old daughter to camp.

Even though most camps will be open, reduced capacity necessitated by COVID-19 restrictions and the labor shortage will keep numbers well below a normal threshold of about 26 million summer campers, said Tom Rosenberg of the American Camp Association.

Across the country, many camps face competition for counselors in a tight job market. Traditional recruit-

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ment tactics like job fairs on college campuses have been canceled.

"It's been hard to get people to work," said Josh Nelson, at Glorieta Adventure Camp, a facility in pine-covered foothills outside Santa Fe, New Mexico.

A group of Glorieta camp staffers started their orientation by rolling up their sleeves and getting vaccinated in an area between the mess hall and the water slides. But many campers are too young to get the shots because the vaccines have not been approved for children under 12.

That means this year's camp experience will still involve many of the same prevention practices that were adopted at the small number of camps that operated last year. Those measures include grouping kids in cohorts, mandating masks, emphasizing social distancing — and lots of hand washing. Some states, like Vermont, are offering free virus testing for campers.

At an all-girls camp called Fernwood in Maine, about 200 of the 300 counselors and campers will be vaccinated by the time the six-week term starts.

"Going into it, it's a much better scenario for us. Because instead of being worried about 300 people, we're worried about 100 people," Fernwood Director Fritz Seving said.

Norman plans to send daughter Jane Ellen to Camp Illahee in Brevard, North Carolina, and he's glad the camp is encouraging vaccinations.

Jane Ellen agreed and said the focus on vaccines is a good idea.

"If most people are vaccinated, the more people can go," she said.

Back at Glorieta, staff arrived in May from Oklahoma, Texas and a college town in Mexico called Puebla, where an in-person recruiting fair took place. They have been training on safety protocols, including virus protection, zip lining and life guarding.

The camp is running at one-third capacity — 1,100 out of 3,000 slots are filled — and staff will be grouped in pods. Kids are expected to wear masks, even outdoors, except when they are eating meals or in their sleeping dorm.

More than 90% of the staff agreed to be vaccinated, but there was no mandate for vaccinations.

Even with those limitations, the outlook is much better than last year, when camp was canceled and 80% of the staff was laid off by March, Nelson said. Federal Paycheck Protection Program loans helped but didn't alleviate all of the financial pain, he said.

Rosenberg said camp is more important than ever in terms of providing normalcy for kids who have dealt with remote learning, canceled events and boredom at home, not to mention health worries.

"Kids have been traumatized. They've had some real academic losses. We still haven't talked enough about the social and emotional learning losses," he said.

Camp will let them "practice engaging peer to peer" and offer a chance to "to try new activities, take positive risks and be out in nature, and sort of regain some of the humanity they've lost over the past year."

Last year, about 19.5 million kids missed out on camp, but most of the overnight camps that opened operated successfully. There were a few notable outbreaks. More than 250 people were infected at a camp in Georgia, and more than 80 infected at a camp in Missouri.

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Sharp reported from Portland, Maine. Associated Press Writer Patrick Whittle in Portland also contributed to this report. Attanasio is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on under-covered issues. Follow him on Twitter.

## Dreams of Hazara children snuffed out in attack on school

By KATHY GANNON and TAMEEM AKHGAR Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — For the past four years, since she was 14, the notebook was always within her reach. Shukria Ahmadi titled it "Beautiful Sentences" and put everything in it. Poetry that she liked — sometimes a single line, sometimes long verses. Her drawings, like one of a delicate pink rose. Her attempts at calligraphy in swooping Persian letters.

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Now the notebook is torn and scorched. It was with Shukria the day that three bombings in quick succession hit her school in the Afghan capital Kabul. The May 8 explosions killed nearly 100 people, all of them members of the Hazara ethnic minority and most of them young girls just leaving class.

Shukria has been missing since the blast. "She took this notebook everywhere with her," her father Abdullah Ahmadi said. "I don't remember seeing her without it. She would even use it to shield her eyes from the sun. Everything she loved is in here."

The attack on the Syed Al-Shahada School was gut-wrenching for Afghanistan's Hazaras, even after so many attacks against them over the years. It showed yet again how Islamic State group militants who hate them for their ethnicity or their religion — they are Shiite Muslim — were willing to kill the most vulnerable among them.

The school, which covers grades 1-12, has boys' classes in the morning and girls in the afternoon. The attackers waited until the girls were all crowding out the exits as their day ended.

Zahra Hassani, 13, recounted how she was thrown off her feet by the first explosion.

"I saw bodies burning, everyone was screaming," she said. She saw another student raising her hand calling for help. "I was going to help her, and then the second explosion happened, and I ran and ran," Zahra said.

Speaking in the mostly empty school, Zahra choked back tears and clutched the hand of a friend, Maryam Ahmadi. "What is our sin? That we are Hazara? That we are Shiites?" said Maryam, who is not related to Shukriya. "Is our sin that we are studying?"

Dasht-e-Barchi, the Kabul neighborhood where the school is located, was built by Hazaras' hopes. It had long been the main Hazara district in the capital, and after the fall of the Taliban in 2001, impoverished Hazaras poured in from their strongholds in central Afghanistan in search of jobs. Dasht-e-Barchi swelled into a giant sprawl.

Murals at Syed Al-Shahada school promise students that education and hard work will unlock the future. "Your dreams are limited only by your imagination," proclaims one slogan emblazoned large and bright across a wall.

But the explosions erased the dreams of dozens of Hazara children there. Here are a few of them:

Nekbakht Alizada, 17, dreamed of being a doctor. "I want to help my family and I want to help poor people, like us," her father Abdul Aziz said she told him.

Noria Yousufi, 14, wanted to become an engineer, her father Mehdi said. The best word to describe her, he said: "Kind."

Ameena Razawi, 17, always had a smile on her face, said her father, Naseem Razawi. She hoped to become a surgeon.

Arefa Hussaini, 14, had a slogan she lived by: "Where there is a will there is a way." She vowed that one day she would be a lawyer, but even as she studied, she worked as a tailor to help support her family, her uncle Mohammad Salim said.

Freshta Alizada, 15, shone in her classes and twice had skipped a grade, her Aunt Sabera boasted. Freshta was always telling her family that one day she would become a journalist.

Hadisa Ahmadi, 16, was a math genius and dreamed of becoming a mathematician, her older sister Fatima said. She would always solve Fatima's math problems and tease her that even though she was older, she just didn't get it. Hadisa wove carpets to earn money for her poor family and to pay for additional math tutoring.

Farzana Fazili, 13, was the jokester in her family, said her brother Hamidullah. She too wove carpets in her spare time to earn money for her family. When she wasn't teasing her younger brother, she would help him with his homework.

Safia Sajadi, 14, made clothes to earn money to pay for her English-language lessons, said her father Ali. Weeping, he boasted how his daughter always had the highest marks.

Hassina Haideri, 13, was forever in the kitchen helping her mother, says her father, Alidad. She loved to cook, but she dreamed of becoming a doctor. She sold clothes she made in a nearby shop to earn extra money for her family.



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Mohammad Amin Hussaini said his 16-year-old daughter Aquila loved him better than anyone. She would read him poetry and hoped to become a doctor.

At the Syed-Al-Sahada School, students who survived cried and held each other. Some were angry.

Maryam said Hazaras have no hope in the government, which she said has done nothing to prevent attacks.

"Only God can have mercy on us," she said. "From others, we expect nothing."

## For love of birds: Backyard sleuths boost scientists' work

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Georgetown University ecologist Emily Williams first became fascinated with birds not because of their beauty, or their sweet songs. She was riveted by their extraordinary travels.

"Realizing that this tiny animal that can fit in the palm of your hand can travel thousands and thousands of miles one way in spring, and then does it again later in the year, was just amazing to me," she said. "I have always been dazzled by migration."

This spring and summer, her research project tracking the annual migration of American robins has gotten a boost from the enthusiasm of homeowners in the greater Washington area, who've let her and a research assistant set up makeshift research stations in their backyards before dawn — and sometimes contributed their own notes and observations.

Several homeowners have eagerly shown her where they've discovered robins' nests in their azalea bushes, or shared diaries they've made on the movements of birds passing through their yards — not only robins, but also cardinals, blue jays, house wrens, tufted titmice, white-throated sparrows, even red-shouldered hawks.

Williams often begins her fieldwork at 4:30 a.m., but she can only be in one backyard at a time. And so her research, like that of many biologists, benefits from the cooperation and excitement of a growing number of citizen scientists — some of whom record their daily observations on Cornell University's popular bird-watching smartphone app, eBird.

"People who love birds and report their sightings — that's really helping scientists learn in much greater detail about birds' behavior and distribution," said Adriaan Dokter, an ecologist at Cornell.

Arjun Amar, a conservation biologist at the University of Cape Town, has even used photos uploaded by citizen scientists on Cornell's platform as the foundation of new research projects — such as examining global variations in the stripes on peregrine falcons' faces, which reduce solar glare and allow them to dive at breakneck speeds. "This wouldn't have been so possible before," he said.

The pandemic that put much of normal life on pause — stopping travel and shutting people in their homes — also afforded more time for many families to study the wildlife in their own backyards.

Cornell's records show a boom in amateur bird-watching. The number of people submitting eBird checklists — recording their bird sightings — was up 37% in 2020 compared with the previous year. The annual "big day" event, when people are encouraged to submit sightings during spring migration (this year, on May 8), also set participation records.

Those numbers don't surprise Williams, who says many of her non-scientist friends have taken up bird-watching during the past year.

"Maybe you'd have to travel to Alaska or Canada to see a grizzly bear, or go to Africa to see a zebra — but birds are literally right outside your door, anywhere you are in the world," she said. "People have really started to pay more attention to their backyards because they had to stay home so much. I think it's a huge boon for us as scientists, that more people appreciate birds."

"One Good Thing" is a series that highlights individuals whose actions provide glimmers of joy in hard times — stories of people who find a way to make a difference, no matter how small. Read the collection of stories at <https://apnews.com/hub/one-good-thing>

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## **EXPLAINER: What will change under Israel's new government?**

By JOSEPH KRAUSS Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — If all goes according to plan, Israel will swear in a new government on Sunday, ending Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's record 12-year rule and a political crisis that inflicted four elections on the country in less than two years.

The next government, which will be led by the ultranationalist Naftali Bennett, has vowed to chart a new course aimed at healing the country's divisions and restoring a sense of normalcy.

Anything more ambitious would be courting disaster.

The coalition consists of eight parties from across Israel's political spectrum, including a small Arab party that has made history by joining a government for the first time. If even one party bolts, the government would be at serious risk of collapse, and Netanyahu, who intends to stay on as opposition leader, is waiting in the wings.

Here's a look at what to expect:

### A FRAGILE COALITION

The coalition holds only a slight majority in the 120-member Knesset and includes parties from the right, left and center. Each party signed a coalition agreement ahead of a Friday deadline, keeping the transition on track.

But just about the only things they agree on are that Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, should leave office, and that the country cannot endure another back-to-back election.

They are expected to adopt a modest agenda acceptable to Israelis from across the ideological divide that steers clear of hot-button issues. Their first big challenge will be to agree on a budget, the first since 2019. Economic reforms and infrastructure spending may follow.

Bennett will serve as prime minister for the first two years, followed by the centrist Yair Lapid, a former journalist who was the driving force behind the coalition. But that's only if the government survives that long.

### MANAGING THE CONFLICT

Bennett is a religious ultranationalist who supports settlement expansion and is opposed to a Palestinian state. But he risks losing his job if he alienates his dovish coalition partners.

That will likely mean a continuation of Netanyahu's approach of managing the decades-old conflict without trying to end it. Annexing the occupied West Bank and invading Gaza are probably off the table, but so are any major concessions to the Palestinians.

Every Israeli government has expanded Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem, which Israel captured in the 1967 war and which the Palestinians want for their future state. This government is expected to do so in a subdued way that avoids angering the Biden administration, which is pushing for restraint and an eventual revival of peace talks.

The new government is expected to maintain Netanyahu's hard-line stance on Iran and oppose President Joe Biden's efforts to revive its international nuclear deal. But senior officials have already vowed to do so behind closed doors rather than bringing the rift out into the open, as Netanyahu did during the Obama years.

The new government will also likely work with Biden to strengthen ties with Arab states.

### HEALING DIVISIONS

The biggest change will likely be felt domestically, as the government struggles to heal the divisions in Israeli society that opened up during the Netanyahu years, between Jews and Arabs and between ultra-Orthodox and secular Israelis.

"The government will work for all the Israeli public — religious, secular, ultra-Orthodox, Arab — without exception, as one," Bennett said Friday. "We will work together, out of partnership and national responsibility, and I believe we will succeed."

The United Arab List, a small party with Islamist roots led by Mansour Abbas, is the first Arab party to sit

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in a coalition. In return for helping to oust Netanyahu, he is expected to secure large budgets for housing, infrastructure and law enforcement in Arab communities.

Israel's Arab citizens make up 20% of the population and face widespread discrimination. They have close familial ties to the Palestinians and largely identify with their cause, leading many Jewish Israelis to view them with suspicion. Tensions boiled over during last month's Gaza war, when Jews and Arabs fought in the streets of Israel's mixed cities.

The new government already faces hostility from Israel's ultra-Orthodox community — staunch supporters of Netanyahu. Earlier this week, ultra-Orthodox leaders condemned it in harsh terms, with one demanding Bennett remove his kippa, the skullcap worn by observant Jews.

## RETURN OF THE KING?

After a quarter-century at the highest levels of Israeli politics, no one expects the 71-year-old Netanyahu, dubbed the "King of Israel" by his supporters, to quietly retire to his private home in the seaside town of Caesarea.

As opposition leader and the head of the largest party in parliament, Netanyahu is expected to continue doing everything in his power to bring down the government. His best hope for avoiding conviction on serious corruption charges is to battle them from the prime minister's office, with a governing coalition that could potentially grant him immunity.

But his domineering presence could continue to bind his opponents together. Bennett, already branded a traitor by much of the right-wing base he shares with Netanyahu, heads a tiny party and is unlikely to get another shot at the top job.

Netanyahu could meanwhile face a challenge from within his defeated Likud party, which includes a number of would-be successors. They know that without the polarization around Netanyahu, the Likud would be able to assemble a strong, stable, right-wing government. But Netanyahu retains a strong hold on the party's institutions and its base, and senior members are unlikely to challenge him unless his downfall is assured.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, June 12, the 163rd day of 2021. There are 202 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 12, 1987, President Ronald Reagan, during a visit to the divided German city of Berlin, exhorted Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev to "tear down this wall."

On this date:

In 1630, Englishman John Winthrop, leading a fleet carrying Puritan refugees, arrived at the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where he became its governor.

In 1939, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum was dedicated in Cooperstown, New York.

In 1942, Anne Frank, a German-born Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, received a diary for her 13th birthday, less than a month before she and her family went into hiding from the Nazis.

In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers, 37, was shot and killed outside his home in Jackson, Mississippi. (In 1994, Byron De La Beckwith was convicted of murdering Evers and sentenced to life in prison; he died in 2001.)

In 1964, South African Black nationalist Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life in prison along with seven other people, including Walter Sisulu, for committing sabotage against the apartheid regime (all were eventually released, Mandela in 1990).

In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Loving v. Virginia*, unanimously struck down state laws prohibiting interracial marriages.

In 1971, Tricia Nixon and Edward F. Cox were married in the White House Rose Garden.

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In 1981, major league baseball players began a 49-day strike over the issue of free-agent compensation. (The season did not resume until Aug. 10.)

In 1991, Russians went to the polls to elect Boris N. Yeltsin president of their republic.

In 1994, Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman were slashed to death outside her Los Angeles home. (O.J. Simpson was later acquitted of the killings in a criminal trial but was eventually held liable in a civil action.)

In 2004, former President Ronald Reagan's body was sealed inside a tomb at his presidential library in Simi Valley, California, following a week of mourning and remembrance by world leaders and regular Americans.

In 2015, Joyce Mitchell, a worker at the maximum-security Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, New York, was arrested on charges of helping two convicted killers escape; Mitchell later pleaded guilty to promoting prison contraband and was sentenced to 2 1/3 to seven years in prison.

Ten years ago: The Dallas Mavericks won their first NBA title by winning Game 6 of the finals against the Miami Heat, 105-95. "The Book of Mormon" took home nine Tony Awards, including the prize for best musical; "War Horse" won five Tonys, including the best play award.

Five years ago: A gunman opened fire at the Pulse nightclub, a gay establishment in Orlando, Florida, leaving 49 people dead and 53 wounded; Omar Mateen pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group during a three-hour standoff before being killed in a shootout with police.

One year ago: Rayshard Brooks, a 27-year-old Black man, was shot and killed by one of the two white officers who responded after he was found asleep in his car in the drive-thru lane of a Wendy's restaurant in Atlanta; police body camera video showed Brooks struggling with the officers and grabbing a Taser from one of them, firing it as he fled. (An autopsy found that Brooks had been shot twice in the back. Officer Garrett Rolfe faces charges including murder.) A federal judge ordered Seattle police to temporarily stop using tear gas, pepper spray and flash-bang devices to break up peaceful protests. The Oregon Supreme Court upheld Gov. Kate Brown's shutdown orders aimed at stemming the coronavirus pandemic. William Sessions, a former federal judge appointed by President Ronald Reagan to head the FBI and fired years later by President Bill Clinton, died at his Texas home at the age of 90.

Today's Birthdays: Songwriter Richard M. Sherman is 93. Sportscaster Marv Albert is 80. Singer Roy Harper is 80. Actor Roger Aaron Brown is 72. Actor Sonia Manzano is 71. Rock musician Bun E. Carlos (Cheap Trick) is 70. Country singer-musician Junior Brown is 69. Singer-songwriter Rocky Burnette is 68. Actor Timothy Busfield is 64. Singer Meredith Brooks is 63. Actor Jenilee Harrison is 63. Rock musician John Linnell (They Might Be Giants) is 62. Actor John Enos is 59. Rapper Grandmaster Dee (Whodini) is 59. Actor Paul Schulze is 59. Actor Eamonn Walker is 59. Actor Paula Marshall is 57. Actor Frances O'Connor is 54. Actor Rick Hoffman is 51. Actor-comedian Finesse Mitchell is 49. Actor Mel Rodriguez is 48. Actor Jason Mewes is 47. Actor Michael Muhney is 46. Blues musician Kenny Wayne Shepherd is 44. Actor Timothy Simons is 43. Actor Wil Horneff is 42. Singer Robyn is 42. Rock singer-musician John Gourley (Portugal. The Man) is 40. Actor Dave Franco is 36. Country singer Chris Young is 36. Actor Luke Youngblood is 35. Actor Ryan Malgarini is 29.