

Groton Daily Independent

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

Fines to be imposed on water restriction violators

Fines will be imposed on those not following the water restrictions. The first offense is a warning, then it will be \$50, the third at \$100, the fourth at \$200 and thereafter at \$500 for each offense in the same season.

A permit for new lawns will be available at \$100 for a 30-day permit which is renewable. The permit has to be approved by the council.

Dale Ringgenberg and Vickie Rossow and Jamie Rossow came before the council to discuss their sewer problems. These property owners had plugged sewers which they said was plugged at the main and not their individual service. The council agreed to pay \$935 of Ringgenberg's \$3,000 bill, which also did include some water service work. The council also forgave the \$375 sewer tapping fee. Rossow's bill of \$824.21 will be paid.

Dacotah Bank and SD Fit were designated as official banks and The Groton Independent as the official newspaper.

Kaitlin O'Neill Day is proclaimed for July 18, 2021, which is her birthday as well.

Paul Karst Day is proclaimed for July 30, 2021 during the State American Legion Baseball Tournament.

The new city sign was approved by the council for a cost of \$2,342. It will be paid for with COVID-19 relief funds.

Todd Gay will be offered the electric superintendent job. He is currently the electric superintendent in Winner.



**JOIN
OUR TEAM**

John Sieh Insurance Agency 702 S Main, Aberdeen SD is hiring a Personal Lines Sales & Customer Service Representative, full benefits, competitive wage, full time-40 hours per week, licensing necessary but not required to apply. Proficiency in Excel and Microsoft Office programs, phone skills with professional etiquette required. Primary job responsibility is to service & sell personal lines policy for the agency and assist other producers in the office with quoting and new applications, claims, payments and helping customers with questions or concerns. Self-motivated and team player are required for this position. Please email resume to kathy@jsains.com or drop off at 702 S Main, Aberdeen, SD 57401. (0629.0713)

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Groton Jr Legion Can't Catch Up To Smitty's Jr. Legion

Groton Jr Legion fell behind early and couldn't come back in a 15-2 loss to Smitty's Jr. Legion on Monday. Smitty's Jr. Legion took the lead on a single in the first inning.

The Groton Jr Legion struggled to contain the high-powered offense of Smitty's Jr. Legion, giving up 15 runs.

Smitty's Jr. Legion fired up the offense in the first inning. Smitty's Jr. Legion scored two runs when Braxton Kusler singled.

Smitty's Jr. Legion scored six runs in the sixth inning. The big inning for Smitty's Jr. Legion came thanks to singles by Drew Salfrank and Casey Vining, a walk by Carter Dingman, a fielder's choice by Woehl, and a double by Brenden Livermont.

Lemer earned the win for Smitty's Jr. Legion. The pitcher allowed one hit and two runs over four innings, striking out one. Phillip Zens threw one inning in relief out of the bullpen.

Colby D took the loss for Groton Jr Legion. The hurler allowed three hits and three runs over two innings, striking out one.

Andrew M went 1-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Jr Legion in hits. Groton Jr Legion was sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Kaleb H made the most plays with five.

Smitty's Jr. Legion racked up 16 hits on the day. Salfrank, Kusler, Vining, Zens, Fischbach, and Livermont all managed multiple hits for Smitty's Jr. Legion. Salfrank led Smitty's Jr. Legion with four hits in five at bats. Smitty's Jr. Legion was sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Fischbach had the most chances in the field with five.

Groton Jr. Teeners Jumps Out To Early Lead In Victory Over Milbank

Groton Jr. Teeners grabbed an early lead on its way to an 8-4 victory over Milbank on Tuesday. Groton Jr. Teeners scored on an error in the first inning, a single by Jarrett Erdmann in the first inning, a walk by Brevin Flihs in the first inning, and a groundout by Nicholas Morris in the second inning.

After Milbank scored one run in the top of the third, Groton Jr. Teeners answered with one of their own. Groton Jr. Teeners then answered when Teylor Diegel singled on a 1-0 count, scoring one run.

Caden Mcinerney was the winning pitcher for Groton Jr. Teeners. Mcinerney surrendered three runs on two hits over four innings, striking out three. Kellen Antonsen threw three innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Joe Schulte took the loss for Milbank. The bulldog went two innings, allowing six runs on two hits and striking out three.

Diegel, Flihs, Braxton Imrie, Morris, and Erdmann each collected one hit to lead Groton Jr. Teeners. Diegel led Groton Jr. Teeners with four stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with ten stolen bases.

Milbank tore up the base paths, as two players stole at least two bases. Josh Pederson led the way with eight.

Late Score Costs Groton Jr. Teeners Against Milbank

Tuesday's game against Milbank was a heartbreaker for Groton Jr. Teeners, as they lost the lead late in a 5-4 defeat. The game was tied at four with Milbank batting in the top of the fifth when an error scored one run for Milbank.

Groton Jr. Teeners lost despite out-hitting Milbank five to three.

Milbank fired up the offense in the first inning, when Gage Anderson grounded out, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners knotted the game up at four in the bottom of the fourth inning, when an error scored one run for Groton Jr. Teeners.

Josh Pederson took the win for Milbank. The ace lasted two innings, allowing one hit and zero runs while striking out two and walking zero.

Carter Simon took the loss for Groton Jr. Teeners. The pitcher allowed one hit and three runs over two innings, striking out two and walking zero.

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Reese Rabe started the game for Milbank. The bulldog allowed four hits and four runs over three innings, striking out three. Karsten Flihs started the game for Groton Jr. Teeners. Flihs lasted three innings, allowing two hits and two runs while striking out four.

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

Milbank stole eight bases during the game as two players stole more than one. Pederson led the way with four.

Groton Post #39 Defeats Northville (SD) In A Blow-Out Victory

Groton Legion Post #39 had no trouble on offense today, winning big over Northville (SD) 12-3.

Groton Legion Post #39 got things started in the second inning. Cade Larson singled on a 1-2 count, scoring one run.

Groton Legion Post #39 scored five runs in the fourth inning. The big inning was thanks to singles by Pierce Kettering and Chandler Larson, an error on a ball put in play by Jace Kroll and Alex Morris, and a walk by Darien Shabazz.

Morris took the win for Groton Legion Post #39. The righty went two innings, allowing zero runs on zero hits, striking out five and walking one. Larson, Peyton Johnson, and Jackson Cogley all put in work in relief out of the bullpen, steering their team towards the victory.

Josh McQuerrie took the loss for Northville (SD). The hurler went four innings, allowing seven runs on seven hits and striking out seven.

Groton Legion Post #39 had 13 hits in the game. Kettering, Jayden Zak, Shabazz, and Larson each collected multiple hits for Groton Legion Post #39. Larson, Shabazz, Zak, and Kettering each collected two hits to lead Groton Legion Post #39. Groton Legion Post #39 was sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Larson had the most chances in the field with 11.

Northville (SD) collected five hits. McQuerrie and Ben Fischbach all had multiple hits for Northville (SD).

Groton Post #39 Falls To Northville (SD) After Third Inning Score

Groton Legion Post #39 lost the lead late in a 7-3 defeat to Northville (SD) on Tuesday. The game was tied at one with Northville (SD) batting in the bottom of the third when an error scored one run for Northville (SD).

Groton Legion Post #39 lost despite out-hitting Northville (SD) five to three.

Groton Legion Post #39 got things started in the first inning. Groton Legion Post #39 scored one run when Tate Larson singled.

Northville (SD) evened things up at one in the bottom of the second inning when Carson Gohl grounded out, scoring one run.

Northville (SD) scored three runs in the fourth inning. Northville (SD) offense in the inning was led by Kade Stahl, Ben Fischbach, and Gohl, who all drove in runs.

Fehi pitched Northville (SD) to victory. The ace allowed five hits and three runs over four innings, striking out four.

Jayden Zak took the loss for Groton Legion Post #39. The pitcher surrendered four runs on three hits over two and a third innings, striking out three.

Larson led Groton Legion Post #39 with two hits in two at bats.

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U.S. Department of Education Approves South Dakota's Plan for Use of American Rescue Plan Funds to Support K-12 Schools and Students, Distributes Remaining \$127 Million

On Wednesday, July 7, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) announced the approval of South Dakota's American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) plans and distributed remaining ARP ESSER funds to them. South Dakota's plan details how the state is using and plan to use ARP ESSER funds to re-engage students across the state and equitably expand opportunity for students who need it most, particularly those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier this year, the Department distributed two thirds of the ARP ESSER funds, totaling \$81 billion, to 50 states and the District of Columbia. The remaining third of the funding to states will be made available once state plans are approved. South Dakota is receiving more than \$381 million total in ARP ESSER funds, and today's approval of their plan will result in the release of the final \$127 million. Additionally, the Department approved plans for Arkansas, Massachusetts, Utah, Texas, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia.

"I am excited to announce approval for South Dakota's plan," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "It is heartening to see, reflected in these state plans, the ways in which states are thinking deeply about how to use American Rescue Plan funds to continue to provide critical support to schools and communities, particularly as we move into the summer and look ahead to the upcoming academic year. The approval of these plans enables states to receive vital, additional American Rescue Plan funds to quickly and safely reopen schools for full-time, in-person learning; meet students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and address disparities in access to educational opportunity that were exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. The state plans that have been submitted to the Department lay the groundwork for the ways in which an unprecedented infusion of federal resources will be used to address the urgent needs of America's children and build back better."

"South Dakota is pleased to be among the first states to have their plans approved. South Dakota schools also were among the first in the nation to reopen their doors at the start of the 2020-21 school year," said Secretary of Education Tiffany Sanderson. "Our plan identifies three priorities for the next few years: supporting strong instruction and educational opportunities, addressing students' mental health needs, and focusing on the educator workforce. As we move forward, we will continue to evaluate data and engage with stakeholders as we identify strategies to support engagement and learning for all students."

The ARP ESSER state plans approved by the Department today, including South Dakota, show how states are using Federal pandemic resources to support safe in-person instruction and meet the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of students—with a focus on the students most impacted by the pandemic. For example:

Returning to In Person Learning in 2021 Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining Safe Operations: South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) supported the return to in-person learning in fall 2020 by providing local leaders with the data, resources, and technical assistance they needed to make sound decisions based on the needs of their students, local conditions, and the most up to date science. As most schools have been open the entire previous school year, DOE expects this to continue in school year 2021-22.

Hiring School Nurses, Counselors, and Paraprofessionals: In the 2020-21 school year, DOE supported district-led initiatives to add school nurses, counselors and special education paraprofessionals using federal ESSER funding

Re-Engaging Students: South Dakota is exploring means to assist LEAs in identifying disengaged stu-

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dents through additional tools and programming to support these students' academic progress and overall well-being. State level spending of ARP ESSER funds will focus on strategies designed to engage and re-engage students that may have missed out on instruction and educational opportunities and provide strong instruction for academic attainment for all students based on their individual needs.

A total of 40 states have submitted their ARP ESSER state plans to the Department. The Department is reviewing the plans expeditiously and is in contact with states to ensure their plans meet all necessary requirements in order to access the remaining funds, as outlined in the ARP. The Department is also in contact with states that have not yet submitted plans, the vast majority of which are due to state board of education or legislative review requirements.

The distribution of ARP ESSER funds is part of the Department's broader effort to support students and districts as they work to reengage students impacted by the pandemic, address inequities exacerbated by COVID-19, and build our education system back better than before. In addition to providing \$130 billion for K-12 education in the American Rescue Plan to support the safe reopening of K-12 schools and meet the needs of all students, the Biden-Harris Administration also has:

Released three volumes of the COVID-19 Handbook.

Held a National Safe School Reopening Summit.

Prioritized the vaccination of educators, school staff and child care workers. As of the end of May an estimated 84% of teachers and school staff were fully vaccinated.

Provided \$10 billion in funding for COVID-19 testing for PreK-12 educators, staff, and students.

Launched a series of Equity Summits focused on addressing inequities that existed before, but were made worse by the pandemic.

Released a report on the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on underserved communities.

Developed a Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse elevating hundreds of best practices to support schools' efforts to reopen safely and address the impacts of COVID-19 on students, educators, and communities.

In addition to the actions the Biden Administration has taken to reopen schools, the President has proposed critical investments through his Build Back Better Agenda that will enable schools to rebuild stronger than they were before the pandemic, such as investing billions to build a diverse educator workforce, expand access to pre-K to all families, and invest in school infrastructure, among other provisions.

South Dakota ARP ESSER State Plan Highlights

Total ARP ESSER allocation for South Dakota: \$382,019,236

ARP ESSER funding released to South Dakota on March 24, 2021: \$254,679,491 ARP ESSER funding released to South Dakota on July 7, 2021: \$127,339,745 2020-2021 Preliminary Statewide Enrollment: 139,566

Top Priorities Within South Dakota's Plan:

- Supporting strong pedagogy and educational opportunities
- Addressing students' social-emotional and mental health needs
- Continuing to address issues of educator recruitment and retention

Highlights of South Dakota's Plan:

• Returning to In Person Learning in 2021 Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining Safe Operations: South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) supported the return to in-person learning in fall 2020 by providing local leaders with the data, resources, and technical assistance they needed to make sound decisions based on the needs of their students, local conditions, and the most up to date science. As most schools have been open the entire previous school year, DOE expects this to continue in school year 2021-22.

• Supporting Students Most Impacted by the Pandemic: DOE's plan explains that reopening schools for in-person instruction in August 2020 was the most effective strategy for addressing students' needs. DOE

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notes that some of its most underserved students, including students in tribal communities, did not have access to in-person instruction. Past supports included: a Starting Well guide created in summer 2020 created in conjunction with educators from across the state providing guiding principles for the reopening and safe operation of school facilities at the start of the 2020-21 school year; calls with administrators regarding participation and student discipline; calls with administrators on summer programming and enhanced learning; and supporting programs that create positive learning environments. DOE also uses comprehensive needs assessment tools to help districts diagnose root causes of equity issues and identify solutions.

- **Re-Engaging Students:** South Dakota is exploring means to assist LEAs in identifying disengaged students through additional tools and programming to support these students' academic progress and overall well-being. State level spending of ARP ESSER funds will focus on strategies designed to engage and re-engage students that may have missed out on instruction and educational opportunities and provide strong instruction for academic attainment for all students based on their individual needs.

- **Hiring School Nurses, Counselors, and Paraprofessionals:** In the 2020-21 school year, DOE supported district-led initiatives to add school nurses, counselors and special education paraprofessionals using federal ESSER funding.

Community Engagement and Consultation:

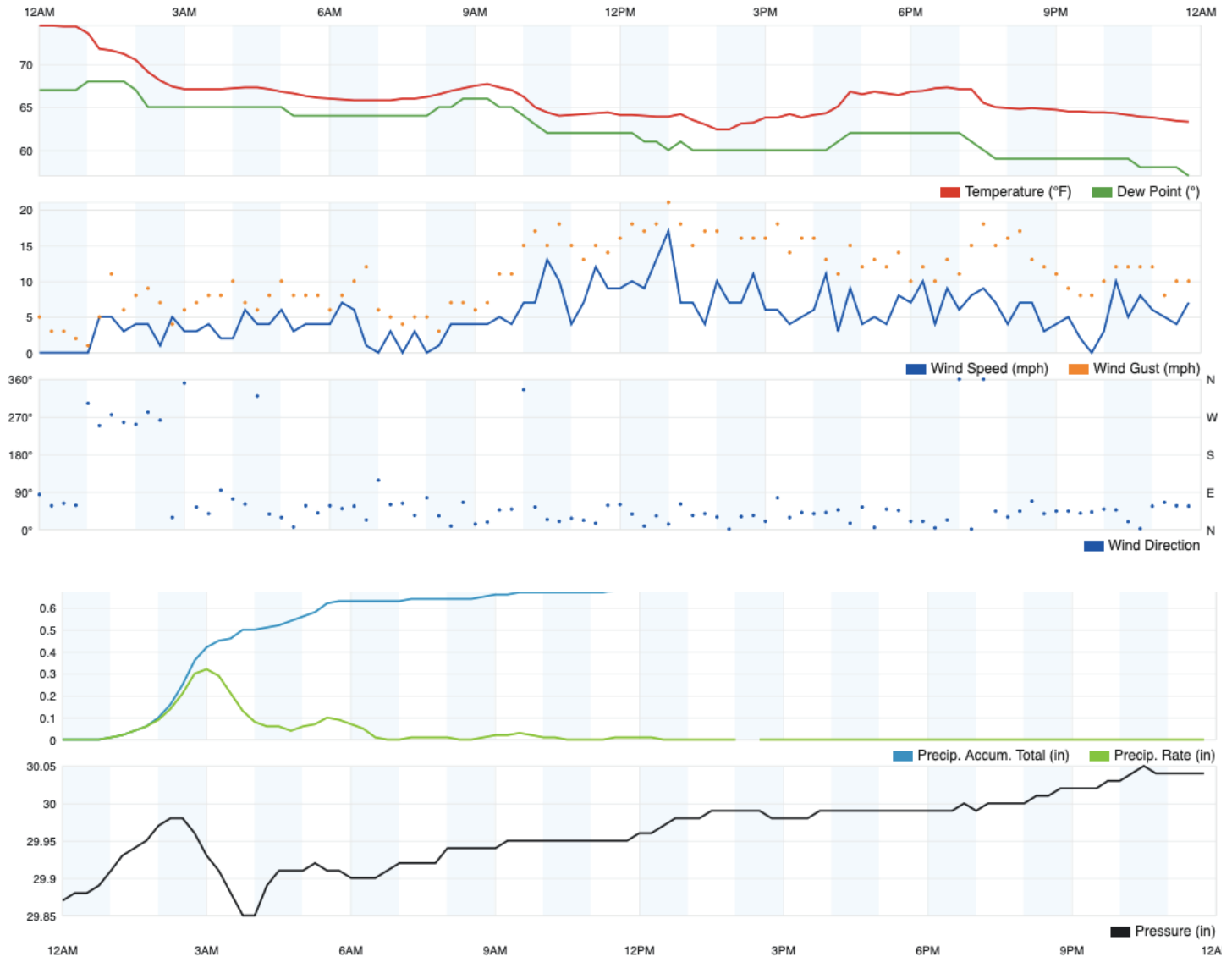
- DOE conducted robust community engagement to develop its state plan and identify the top needs of schools and communities across the state. Through a variety of engagement strategies, stakeholders identified several common priorities for South Dakota students and schools: student mental health, student disengagement and lost instructional time, and the impact of COVID-19 on the educator workforce. DOE plans to continue its stakeholder engagement and plans to hold an August summit to dive into further topics of the state plan and allow the community to provide input as DOE makes decisions about evidence-based interventions.

When South Dakota's LEA Use of Funds Plans will be due: August 20, 2021

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs






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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Gradual Clearing	Increasing Clouds	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 78 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 80 °F

Dry and mild today
Thunderstorm chances return tonight and Thursday

Today 73 to 82° Decreasing clouds 	Tonight 53 to 61° Overnight thunderstorms. 	Thursday 74 to 94° Warmer temps in south central South Dakota. Afternoon thunderstorms. 
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National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
www.weather.gov/abr
graphic created 7/7/2021 3:49 AM

Dry and mild conditions today will give way to a more active pattern, with chances for thunderstorms returning late tonight and Thursday. The active pattern looks to continue into the early part of the week-end as well.

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Today in Weather History

July 7, 1959: A powerful and widespread windstorm began near Kadoka and moved northeastward across the state at a speed of 60 to 65 mph. Airplane hangers were damaged or destroyed at Murdo, Redfield, and Watertown. Fourteen barns were destroyed or severely damaged. Five trailer homes were overturned.

July 7, 1990: A teenager was injured by softball size hail while working in a field near Herreid. The large hail also injured many cattle in the area. Most homes and vehicles in town suffered damage. The Herreid School had 120 broken panes of glass.

July 6, 1994: Widespread rainfall of over 6 inches fell in Dewey, Potter, and Faulk Counties, causing damage to roads and flooded basements and fields. A teenage girl escaped injury when her car was washed away by the waters of a swollen creek about 5 miles east of Gettysburg. Some total storm amounts include; 6.80 inches in Orient; 6.70 at Faulkton; 5.80 in Milbank; 5.48 in Big Stone City; 5.02 in Ipswich; 4.50 in Gettysburg; 4.17 in Webster; 4.12 near Onaka; 4.02 in Leola; and 3.97 in Britton.

1905 - The mercury soared to 127 degrees at Parker, AZ, to tie the state record established at Fort Mohave on the 15th of June in 1896. (The Weather Channel)

1915 - A severe wind and thunderstorm caused heavy damage and 38 deaths in and near Cincinnati, OH. Many older buildings were demolished. The steamship Dick Fulton was overturned. (The Weather Channel)

1981 - Montana was in the midst of a snowstorm that dumped ten inches at Glacier National Park, and produced winds to 90 mph. Meanwhile, Denver, CO, set a record high with a reading of 101 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms spawned eight tornadoes in Colorado, and three in West Texas. Thunderstorms also produced softball size hail at Bula, TX. In the midst of a record thirty-nine day string of 100 degree days, the temperature at Tucson, AZ, dipped to 66 degrees, marking their third straight record low for the date. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thirty-eight cities in the north central and northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. Youngstown, OH, hit 100 degrees, and for the second day in a row, Flint, MI, reached 101 degrees, equalling all-time records for those two cities. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather during the day, with more than 100 reports of large hail and damaging winds from Ohio to Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Thunderstorm winds reached 90 mph in Sullivan County, NH, and golf ball size hail was reported in Pennsylvania. Twenty-four cities, mostly in the southwestern U.S., reported record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 105 degrees at Cedar City, UT, and 114 degrees at Moab, UT, were all-time records for those locations. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1991: During the early daylight hours of Sunday, July 7, 1991, a bow echo developed over southeast South Dakota and began racing east, producing very damaging winds. This bow echo was the start of a long-lived derecho that lasted 17 hours and affected areas from the Great Plains into western New York and Pennsylvania. Wind gusts in some places reached 80 to 100 mph. The strongest gust, 103 mph, was measured at Sioux Center, Iowa around mid-morning, and the roof of a school was blown off in nearby Orange City.

2004: A tornado occurred in the Rockwell Pass area of Sequoia National Park, California. Since the elevation of the tornado's ground circulation was approximately 3705 m (12,156 ft) MSL, this is the highest-elevation tornado documented in the United States.

2012: In Krymsk, Russia, nearly 11 inches of rain falls within a few hours on July 6th. The resulting flash floods occurred during the early morning hours on the 7. The flood wave, as high as 23 feet killed at least 172 people. The 10.83 inches is equivalent to three or four months' worth of precipitation in a typical year.

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THE END!

Christianity is not a religion. Religion is man seeking a god. But in Christianity it is exactly the opposite: it is God seeking man through Jesus Christ. Scripture informs us that God "sent His Son" into the world to seek and to save us that we might have a relationship with Him. It is a relationship that is certain, constant, and continual.

It begins with a grip. A visitor to the Alps decided to go mountain climbing with a famous guide. As they ascended the mountain all went well until they came to a dangerous crevice. His guide held out his hand but the visitor was reluctant and hesitated. "Grab my hand," shouted the guide. "That hand has never lost anyone." So it is with God. "I am always with you," said the Psalmist, "You hold me by my right hand."

It continues with a Guide. God has a plan for each of us. He knows our possibilities as well as our limitations. Only He can guide us in the right path because He created us to be God-guided in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. We often fall short of what God intended us to be and become, but if we are willing, He is able to lead us carefully and safely through life. The Psalmist wisely wrote, "You guide me with Your counsel."

It ends in glory – not a grave. What a blessed hope! He extends His sure-handed grip to keep us from falling. And with our hand in His, He guides us every day of our lives. Finally we end up living eternally with Him. All because our Father loves us with an everlasting love.

Prayer: We thank You, Father, for the assurance of Your presence and power in our lives – today and every day. May our trust overcome our doubts! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Yet I still belong to you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Psalm 73:23-24

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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
08/13/2021 Groton Basketball Golf Tournament
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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

18-47-63-68-69, Mega Ball: 14, Megaplier: 3

(eighteen, forty-seven, sixty-three, sixty-eight, sixty-nine; Mega Ball: fourteen; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$82 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$113 million

2 killed, 1 injured in interstate rollover crash

PLANKINTON, S.D. (AP) — A 19-year-old woman lost control of her vehicle and crashed, killing two male passengers, according to the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

The woman was seriously injured in the rollover crash on Interstate 90 near Plankinton Sunday evening. She was airlifted to a Sioux Falls hospital.

Authorities said the passengers, ages 26 and 60, were not wearing seat belts and were thrown from the vehicle when it rolled. Both men died at the scene.

The victims have not been identified.

Official: Haiti President Jovenel Moïse assassinated at home

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haitian President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in an attack on his private residence, according to a statement Wednesday from the country's interim prime minister, who called the killing a "hateful, inhumane and barbaric act."

First Lady Martine Moïse was shot in the overnight attack and hospitalized, interim Premier Claude Joseph said.

Haiti was already in a precarious political situation before the assassination, having grown increasingly unstable and disgruntled under Moïse. The president ruled by decree for more than two years after the country failed to hold elections and the opposition demanded he step down in recent months.

"The country's security situation is under the control of the National Police of Haiti and the Armed Forces of Haiti," Joseph said in a statement from his office. "Democracy and the republic will win."

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, the streets were largely empty in the Caribbean nation's capital of Port-au-Prince, but some people ransacked businesses in one area.

Joseph said police have been deployed to the National Palace and the upscale community of Pétionville and will be sent to other areas.

Joseph condemned the assassination as a "hateful, inhumane and barbaric act." He said some of the attackers spoke in Spanish but offered no further explanation.

Haiti's economic, political and social woes have deepened recently, with gang violence spiking heavily in Port-au-Prince, inflation spiraling and food and fuel becoming scarcer at times in a country where 60% of the population makes less than \$2 a day. These troubles come as Haiti still tries to recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Matthew that struck in 2016.

Opposition leaders accused Moïse, who was 53, of seeking to increase his power, including by approving a decree that limited the powers of a court that audits government contracts and another that created an intelligence agency that answers only to the president.

In recent months, opposition leaders demanded he step down, arguing that his term legally ended

in February 2021. Moise and supporters maintained that his term began when he took office in early 2017, following a chaotic election that forced the appointment of a provisional president to serve during a year-long gap.

Haiti was scheduled to hold general elections later this year.

Tropical Storm Elsa weakens, spares Florida of major damage

By CURT ANDERSON Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A weakened Tropical Storm Elsa dumped rain along a long stretch of Florida's Gulf Coast early Wednesday but appears to have spared the state significant damage and power outages.

Elsa wobbled through the Gulf of Mexico, briefly reaching hurricane strength, but was expected to move ashore as a tropical storm. Tornado warnings were issued in several northern Florida counties, including the Gainesville area, on Wednesday morning. Heavy rain and gusty winds are expected across northern Florida once the storm makes an expected turn to the northeast. Some flooding is also expected in the region, where the ground is already saturated from heavy rain late last week.

Tropical storm warnings were canceled for Cape Coral and Fort Myers. Further north, the Tampa Bay metropolitan area — while wet and windy — appears to have emerged mostly unscathed. Tampa was no longer under a hurricane warning, but weather forecasters warned of tropical storm conditions, including strong winds and flash flooding. The two electric utilities that serve the region, Duke Energy and TECO Energy, reported that just under 5,000 customers were without power at 7 a.m.

"We're fortunate to see minimal damage & flooding this morning, but it's important to keep safety top of mind. Be aware of your surroundings & don't drive through flood waters," Tampa Mayor Jane Castor said via Twitter.

The storm was moving northward, almost parallel to the west coast of the state, according to forecasters.

Elsa's maximum sustained winds stood at 65 mph (100 kph), the Miami-based U.S. National Hurricane Center said in its 5 a.m. EDT advisory. Its core was about 50 miles (75 kilometers) south-southwest of Cedar Key. It was moving north at 14 mph (22 kmh).

Schools and government offices in the Tampa area were closed and most public events postponed as Elsa approached Tuesday. Castor, however, predicted hockey's Stanley Cup finals game between the Tampa Bay Lightning and Montreal Canadiens would be played as scheduled Wednesday night.

Tampa International Airport suspended operations at 5 p.m. Tuesday and planned to resume flights at 10 a.m. Wednesday following a check for any storm damage, according to its website.

Earlier Tuesday, Elsa swept past the Florida Keys but spared the low-lying island chain a direct hit.

The storm also complicated the search for potential survivors and victims in the collapse of a Miami-area condominium on June 24. Despite that challenge, crews continued the search in the rubble of Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Florida, on the state's southeast coast.

Forecasters said Elsa would slice across inland north Florida as a tropical storm with strong rains and wind, then move on to Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia before heading out in the Atlantic Ocean by Friday. A tropical storm watch was in effect early Wednesday for the coasts of North Carolina and Virginia from Duck, North Carolina to Chincoteague, Virginia, and for the Chesapeake Bay south of New Point Comfort.

In Georgia, a tropical storm warning was posted along the portion of the coast of Brunswick, with the National Hurricane Center saying tropical storm conditions with sustained winds of up to 50 mph (80 kph) are expected in parts of southeast Georgia.

"Right now, we're basically looking at a cloudy, rainy and windy day," Glynn County Emergency Management Agency Director Alec Eaton told the Brunswick News on Tuesday. "I feel confident we can sit down and let it pass over us without any major impacts. Hopefully."

To the north in South Carolina, emergency officials were watching Elsa, but no evacuations were ordered during the peak summer beach tourism season. The storm was expected to track inland, but coastal forecasters noted the worst weather was on the east side of the storm and could dump up to 5 inches (13 centimeters) of rain and bring wind gusts up to 55 mph (88 kph) in places like Hilton Head Island,

Charleston and Myrtle Beach.

Earlier, Cuban officials evacuated 180,000 people against the possibility of heavy flooding from a storm that already battered several Caribbean islands, killing at least three people.

Elsa is the earliest fifth-named storm on record, said Brian McNoldy, a hurricane researcher at the University of Miami.

Tropical Storm Elsa weakens, spares Florida of major damage

By CURT ANDERSON Associated Press

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14 days after Florida condo collapse, no signs of survivors

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

SURFSIDE, Fla. (AP) — The search for victims of the collapse of a Miami-area high-rise condominium reached its 14th day on Wednesday, with the death toll at three dozen, more than 100 people still unaccounted for and authorities sounding more and more grim.

Crews on Tuesday dug through pulverized concrete where the Champlain Towers South building in Surfside once stood, filling buckets that were passed down a line to be emptied and then returned.

The up-close look at the search, compliments of video released by the Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department, came as eight more deaths were announced — the most for a single day since the search began. It also came as rain and wind from Tropical Storm Elsa disrupted the effort, though the storm was on track to make landfall far across the state.

Searchers have found no new signs of survivors, and although authorities said their mission was still geared toward finding people alive, they sounded increasingly somber.

"Right now, we're in search and rescue mode," the county's police director, Freddy Ramirez, said at a news conference Tuesday evening. He soon added: "Our primary goal right now is to bring closure to the families."

No one has been rescued from the site since the first hours after the building collapsed on June 24 when many of its residents were asleep.

Searchers were still looking for any open spaces within the mounds of rubble where additional survivors might be found, said the county's fire chief, Alan Cominsky.

"Unfortunately, we are not seeing anything positive," he said.

Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava said the families of the missing were preparing for news of "tragic loss." She said President Joe Biden, who visited the area last week, called Tuesday to offer his continued support.

"I think everybody will be ready when it's time to move to the next phase," she said.

Reporters got their closest in-person look at the site Tuesday, though it was limited to the portion of the building that workers tore down Sunday after the initial collapse left it standing but dangerously unstable. A pile of shattered concrete and twisted steel stood about 30 feet (9 meters) high and spanned roughly half the length of a football field. A pair of backhoes pulled rubble off the pile, which blocked any view of the search effort.

Severe weather from Elsa hindered search efforts to a degree. Lightning forced rescuers to pause their work for two hours early Tuesday, Assistant Fire Chief Raide Jadallah said. And winds of 20 mph (32 kph), with stronger gusts, hampered efforts to move heavy debris with cranes, officials said.

However, the storm's heaviest winds and rain would bypass Surfside and neighboring Miami as Elsa weakened along its path to an expected landfall somewhere between Tampa Bay and Florida's Big Bend.

Crews have removed 124 tons (112 metric tonnes) of debris from the site, Cominsky said. The debris was being sorted and stored in a warehouse as potential evidence in the investigation into why the building collapsed, officials said.

Workers have been freed to search a broader area since the unstable remaining portion of the building was demolished.

Pope, recovering well, had 'severe' narrowing of his colon

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By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis' recovery from intestinal surgery continues to be "regular and satisfactory," the Vatican said Wednesday, as it revealed that final examinations showed he had suffered a "severe" narrowing of his colon.

The Vatican spokesman, Matteo Bruni, said the 84-year-old pope was continuing to eat regularly following his Sunday surgery to remove the left side of his colon, and that intravenous therapy had been suspended.

Bruni said final examination of the affected tissue "confirmed a severe diverticular stenosis with signs of sclerosing diverticulitis," or a hardening of the sacs that can sometimes form in the lining of the intestine.

Francis underwent three hours of planned surgery Sunday. He is expected to stay in Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic, which has a special suite reserved for popes, through the week, assuming no complications, the Vatican has said.

Among those offering get-well wishes was U.S. President Joe Biden, a Roman Catholic who has cited Francis in the past. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said during a daily briefing Tuesday that the president "wishes him well and a speedy recovery."

Bruni said Francis appreciated all the prayers coming his way.

"Pope Francis is touched by the many messages and the affection received in these days, and expresses his gratitude for the closeness and prayer," he said.

Francis has enjoyed relatively robust health, though he lost the upper part of one lung in his youth because of an infection. He also suffers from sciatica, or nerve pain, that makes him walk with a pronounced limp.

The Vatican has continued normal operations in his absence, though July is traditionally a month when the pope cancels public and private audiences. There was no weekly general audience on Wednesday, for example, but the monthlong suspension of the pope's weekly catechism lessons had been previously announced.

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In Illinois, Biden to push money for families and child care

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is turning his focus to pitching his proposed investments in families and education, using a visit to a community college in a key Illinois swing district to highlight how his spending on so-called human infrastructure would boost the economy.

The president on Wednesday will visit McHenry County College in Crystal Lake, a community college with a workforce development program and a child care center. He'll promote his vision to invest in child care, health care, education and other important aspects of everyday life for Americans. His plans were shared by a White House official who insisted on anonymity to preview remarks that have not been made public.

The visit marks a fresh focus on the portions of Biden's economic agenda that didn't make it into the bipartisan infrastructure deal that the president signed onto in June. That package includes hundreds of billions of dollars of investments in roads and bridges, transit systems and broadband, but it constitutes only a fraction of the \$4 trillion in spending Biden has proposed as part of a broader plan to reinvigorate the economy and boost the middle class.

On Wednesday, the Democratic president will highlight the rest, including his plans to invest in child care and workforce development programs and provide two years of free community college, universal prekindergarten and paid family and medical leave. He'll make the case that investments in such programs are needed to maintain America's economic growth and competitiveness globally.

He'll also highlight his proposals to establish a clean energy standard and invest in home care for seniors and affordable housing. And he'll speak about his plans to make permanent the expansion in the child tax credit and expanded health care premium subsidies from the COVID-19 aid bill.

Democrats plan to include much of the rest in a bill they hope to pass through a legislative maneuver that would require just a simple majority vote, skirting the 60-vote hurdle in an evenly divided Senate.

"As the president presses for the bipartisan infrastructure framework, he's also pressing ahead on a dual

track for the full breadth and scope of the Build Back Better agenda, which includes his critical climate priorities and the American Families Plan," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday when previewing his plans.

Psaki noted that congressional Democrats are at work on the latter proposal now and that she expected "a lot of behind-the-scenes bill writing, negotiations, discussions on Capitol Hill" as the details are hammered out. Biden has said he would prefer that the two bills move through Congress together, and Democrats are hoping to make progress this month on both.

Biden will be greeted by Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker when he lands in Illinois, and Psaki said he's "eager" to see Democratic Rep. Lauren Underwood, who represents the district.

Biden won Illinois' 14th Congressional District by about 2 percentage points in 2020, and Underwood won reelection by less than that. Hers is one of the top-targeted seats in the nation and is emblematic of the kind of district Democrats will need to hold onto in the 2022 midterms if they hope to maintain control of the House.

Dilip Kumar, Bollywood's great 'Tragedy King,' dies at 98

By ASHOK SHARMA Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Bollywood icon Dilip Kumar, hailed as the "Tragedy King" and one of Hindi cinema's greatest actors, died Wednesday in a Mumbai hospital after a prolonged illness. He was 98.

The "Tragedy King" title came from Kumar's numerous serious roles. In several, his character died as a frustrated lover and a drunkard. He also was known as Bollywood's only Method actor for his expressive performances identifying a character's emotions.

Kumar was hospitalized twice last month after he complained of breathlessness, and his family tweeted "with a heavy heart and profound grief" the announcement of his passing.

"Dilip Kumar will be remembered as a cinematic legend. He was blessed with unparalleled brilliance, due to which audiences across generations were enthralled. His passing away is a loss to our cultural world," Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a tweet that also offered his condolences to Kumar's family and admirers.

"An institution has gone," Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan tweeted. "Whenever the history of Indian Cinema will be written, it shall always be 'before Dilip Kumar, and after Dilip Kumar' .."

"It's the end of an era," filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar said.

He was born Muhammad Yusuf Khan, a Muslim, on Dec. 11, 1922. His Pathan family hailed from Peshawar, in what became Pakistan after the Partition, and he visited his ancestral home in the late 1980s.

Kumar was hugely popular among cinema lovers in Pakistan as well.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said he was saddened to learn of Kumar's death. "For my generation, Dilip Kumar was the greatest and most versatile actor," he tweeted.

Khan also recalled Kumar's generosity in helping to raise funds in Pakistan and London for a trust to set up cancer hospitals in his mother's memory.

He changed his name as he debuted in Bollywood, the Hindi-language film industry centered in Mumbai, with "Jwar Bhata," or "Sea Tides," in 1944.

His career spanned over six decades with over 60 films. His first major box-office hits were "Jugnu," or "Firefly," in 1947 in which he starred alongside Noor Jehan, and the 1948 film "Shaheed," or "Martyr."

He played a variety of characters — a romantic hero in "Andaz," a swashbuckler in "Aan," a dramatic drunkard in "Devdas," a comic role in "Azaad," a Muslim prince in the historical epic "Mughal-e-Azam" and a robber in the social movie "Ganga Jamuna."

Mehboob Khan's blockbuster "Aan" in 1952 was his first film in Technicolor and was among a string of light-hearted roles he took at the suggestion of his psychiatrist to shed his "Tragedy King" image.

He starred in many social drama films like "Footpath," "Naya Daur" ("New Era"), "Musafir" ("Traveller") and "Paigham" ("Message") in 1950s.

His top female co-stars included Madhubala, Nargis, Nimmi, Meena Kumari, Kamini Kaushal and Vyjan-

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thimala.

In 1966, Dilip Kumar married Saira Banu, who was 22 years younger than him, and the couple acted in "Gopi," "Sagina Mahato" and "Bairaag." They had no children.

In 1961, he produced and starred in "Ganga Jamuna" in which he and his brother Nasir Khan played the title roles. It was the only film he produced. Indian media reports say he declined the role of Sherif Ali in David Lean's "Lawrence of Arabia" in 1962. The role went to Egyptian actor Omar Sharif.

He took a break in the late '70s but returned with a character role in the successful "Kranti," or "Revolution" in 1981. He continued playing key roles in films such as "Shakti," "Karma" and "Saudagar." His last film was "Qila" ("Fort") in 1998.

In 1994, he was given the "Dadasaheb Phalke" award, the highest honor for contributions to Indian cinema. He also served in the upper house of Indian Parliament after being nominated for a six-year term.

Costly and critical: the battle for a key Yemeni city

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

MARIB CITY, Yemen (AP) — The two fighters stand shoulder-to-shoulder on a mountain overlook, with a clear view below of the enemy's position. They are part of the last lines of defense between the government's last stronghold in Yemen's north, and the Houthi rebels trying to take it.

Hassan Saleh and his younger brother Saeed, both in their early 20s, have been fighting alongside other government fighters and tribesman outside the oil-rich city of Marib, against the months-long offensive by the Iranian-backed rebels. They say they need more weapons to push the attackers back.

"We need sniper rifles," said Hassan, who was taking a position in a sandbagged trench in the mountainous Kassara region. All that most battalions have are old Kalashnikovs and machine guns mounted on the rear of pickup trucks.

This is the most active frontline in Yemen's nearly 7-year-old civil war, where a steady stream of fighters on both sides are killed or wounded every day, even as international pressure to end the war intensifies. Amid another round of peace talks, this time led by Oman, the desert city of Marib remains the crucible of one of the world's most bogged-down conflicts.

The Houthis have for years attempted to take Marib to complete their control over the northern half of Yemen. But since February, they have waged an intensified offensive from multiple fronts, while hitting the residential city center with missiles and explosive-laden drones, killing and wounding dozens of civilians.

So far, the rebels have made only incremental progress, inching slowly across the desert plain, because of Saudi airstrikes that wreak heavy casualties in their ranks. Government and medical officials in Marib estimate that thousands of fighters have been killed or wounded, mostly rebels, since February. In the Houthi-held capital, Sanaa, mass funerals and death announcements of soldiers, some of them children, indicate how costly the battle has been, though Houthis do not release official death tolls.

The grueling battle over the remote city seems intertwined with the sluggish efforts for peace. The Houthis appear to hope capturing Marib will give them the upper hand in talks. Meanwhile government officials complain that American and international wariness at fueling the interminable war prevents them from getting weapons they need to win in Marib.

The U.S. is pressuring the Saudi-led coalition that backs the government not to provide more weapons for fear they could fall into militants' hands amid worries over government "graft and incompetence," a Yemeni official told the Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief reporters.

"We are at a crossroads," said Marib's provincial governor Sheikh Sultan al-Aradah, arguing the weapons are needed to tip the scales at Marib. "The world has some reservations about arming Yemen in the current time."

An AP crew travelled in recent weeks to the city through Saudi Arabia on a government-organized trip.

Marib, some 115 kilometers (70 miles) east of Sanaa on the edge of Yemen's large deserts, is a strategic gateway from the central highlands to southern and eastern provinces. It's also home to oil and gas fields

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where international firms including Exxon Mobil Corp. and Total SA have interests. Its natural gas bottling plant produces cooking gas for the nation of 29 million people. Its power plant once provided 40% of Yemen's electricity.

Its relative stability in past years made it a haven for those fleeing the war's other fronts. The area, which had a pre-war population of 400,000, now also hosts some 2.2 million displaced people, many of them crowded into camps, according to official statistics.

The city's streets are bustling during the day with taxis and 4x4 vehicles belonging to security forces. At night, men frequent restaurants and cafes or gather in homes, chewing leaves of qat for a stimulant effect. There's little heed paid to the fighting just outside their city.

But the posters of fallen commanders and troops lining the roadways serve as a reminder. The city's cemetery has been expanded to absorb the surge in fatalities.

"We bury between 10 to 15 people every day, mostly martyrs in the war," said Mohammed Saeed Nasser, a guard at the cemetery.

The main hospital in Marib has been overwhelmed by dozens of wounded fighters a day for months, said its director, Dr. Mohamed Abdo al-Qubati. At an intensive care unit, there were 10 patients, all but one injured fighters.

In one of the beds, Ali Saad, 22, lay partially paralyzed. He was shot by a Houthi sniper on the frontline on June 18.

Saad has been fighting in government forces since 2017. During that time, he and his family fled their home in southwestern Dhamar province as the war escalated. Later, he was captured and held for a year in a Houthi prison until he was released in an October prisoner exchange.

"I suffered a lot in captivity, I was tortured physically and mentally," he said. "This gave us a glimpse into what Houthis were really like. We came out with a stronger and indescribable will to fight them." His father and one of his three brothers were also wounded on the Marib front earlier this year.

Yemen's civil war began in 2014 when the Houthis seized Sanaa and much of the north, forcing the government of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi to flee.

The Saudi-led coalition, backed at the time by the U.S., entered the war to try restoring Hadi to power. Amid the relentless air campaign and ground fighting, the war has killed more than 130,000 people and spawned the world's worst humanitarian crisis. It has also created smaller, parallel conflicts, between militants and different factions inside the country.

After years of criticism over civilian casualties from airstrikes, U.S. President Joe Biden's administration in February withdrew its backing for the coalition's campaign in Yemen.

Yemeni government and military officials say that decision, along with Biden's removal of the Houthis from a U.S. terrorism list, emboldened the rebels in Marib.

"The Houthis appear to calculate that if they win in Marib, they will have won the war for the north of Yemen while humiliating the internationally recognized president," said Peter Salisbury, Yemen expert at the International Crisis Group. "That is a considerable prize for their side, as it would also allow them to dictate terms for an end to the war."

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said Thursday that the administration was "beyond fed up" with the Houthis and "horrified by the repeated attacks on Marib." He denounced the rebels for continuing the offensive despite a "serious (peace) proposal before them."

An Omani delegation held talks in Sanaa with Houthi leaders including the group's religious and military leader, Abdel-Malek al-Houthi. A Saudi diplomat, meanwhile, said there have been ongoing efforts, including direct Saudi-Houthi talks since 2019, to find a common ground. He spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

A spokesman for the Houthis did not respond to calls and messages seeking comment.

The rebels want the reopening of Sanaa International Airport, a vital link for Yemen to the outside world that hasn't seen regular commercial flights since 2015, and the lifting of restrictions on the vital Houthi-held Red Sea port of Hodeida.

Salisbury said negotiations have been stuck on what comes first. The Houthis, he said, want a stand-alone

deal on the airport and Hodeida before negotiating a cease-fire. Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government want a package deal on all those issues.

"Until the gap can be bridged, I would expect the Marib offensive to continue," he said..

Building collapse shows town's rich, middle-class division

By TERRY SPENCER and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

SURFSIDE, Fla. (AP) — The condo tower collapse in Surfside could exacerbate the division that already exists between the tiny Florida town's new luxury buildings built for the global elite and those constructed decades ago for the middle class. It is already creating headaches for some small businesses.

The town has seen the construction of numerous new condos in recent years, where large oceanfront units exceeding 3,000 square feet (280 square meters) with modern amenities can fetch \$10 million and up. Meanwhile, small units of 800 square feet (75 square meters) in neighboring condo buildings constructed decades ago can be had for \$400,000.

Ana Bosovic, a South Florida real estate analyst, said the June 24 collapse of the 40-year-old, middle-class Champlain Towers South will exacerbate this division. At least 36 people were killed and more than 100 remain missing.

Bosovic said many buyers will now avoid older buildings, not just because they fear they might also fall but because of repair costs the Champlain South owners faced before the collapse: \$80,000 to \$300,000 per unit. These factors will decrease older condos' value, while prices in luxury buildings will continue to skyrocket.

"The holders of capital who are moving here were never considering older buildings. They are buying newer structures and preconstruction, so I don't see this putting a damper on their appetites," said Bosovic, founder of Analytics Miami. "What this will do is further depress sales of older structures and further bifurcate the market."

Before the Champlain Towers South tragedy, Surfside, with about 6,000 residents on a half-square mile (1.3 square kilometers) of an island off Miami, was one of South Florida's most anonymous municipalities — though in January Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner rented a luxury condo in a new building two blocks from the collapse.

The town is known for its clean beaches and a 12-story limit on its buildings, and stands in contrast with neighboring Miami Beach and its world-famous nightlife, Bal Harbour with its high-end shopping and both with buildings that are double and triple the height of Surfside's tallest.

Mayor Charles Burkett said the town has experienced a "roller coaster" of emotions since the collapse. Demolition of the remaining portion of the structure and Tropical Storm Elsa, which brought strong winds and heavy rains to the area, have intensified what the community is going through.

"We have faced innumerable challenges, but the little good news is the resources we have are all aligned, all focused and pulling in the same direction," he said.

Ryan Mermer moved to Surfside earlier this year from Palm Beach County, drawn by the quiet, the town's proximity to Miami's thriving business climate and its large Orthodox Jewish community. On Saturdays, much of the town closes for the Sabbath except for the chain stores. Surfside was home to Isaac Bashevis Singer, a Yiddish poet and short-story writer who won the 1978 Nobel Prize in Literature.

But Mermer also got a deal on a small apartment built a half-century ago, just steps away from the luxury condo that former President Donald Trump's daughter and son-in-law moved into. While Mermer's building was constructed for the middle class, today's construction is aimed at the New York, European and South American elite, who are drawn by the state's lifestyle, weather and lack of an income tax.

"I pay \$1,375 (a month) ... across the street from the beach; Ivanka and Jared pay \$38,000," said Mermer, a real estate agent who also works for Holocaust Heroes Worldwide, a support group for survivors of the Nazi death camps.

In Surfside's low-key shopping district one recent afternoon, barber Aramis Armor and Freddy Elias, the

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co-owner of a tailor and dry cleaning shop, had no customers. The pandemic hit their businesses hard, both said, and the collapse and the resulting street closures made it difficult for anyone to reach them.

Amor says that in normal times, the business district is full of families — they can have an ice cream, eat pizza or drink a coffee in the many locally owned businesses that dot the downtown.

"They are all very nice, the clients are very good," Armor said. He blamed city officials for his lack of business, saying they should never have let the collapsed building decay like it did.

Elias, who has owned Surfside businesses for 25 years, is hoping a federal low-interest loan promised by President Joe Biden's administration to stores affected by the collapse will tide him over until his customers return. Meanwhile, a partner was headed to a customer's home for a fitting rather than make the client fight traffic to get to the store.

"Since COVID and now this tragedy, it has been very, very bad for us," Elias said. "We need help." The streets reopened this week.

Philanthropies eagerly back ex-UNC professor Hannah-Jones

By HALELUYA HADERO and GLENN GAMBOA AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones used major philanthropic donors to build her future as a tenured professor at Howard University, just as other major donors sought to stymie the Pulitzer Prize-winning Black investigative reporter at the University of North Carolina.

Backed by \$20 million in donations, Hannah-Jones announced Tuesday that she will establish the Center for Journalism and Democracy at Howard to increase diversity in journalism. She also said that political interference from Arkansas newspaper publisher Walter Hussman, who pledged \$25 million to UNC's journalism school and whose name adorns its building, resulted in questions about her receiving tenure, which she was belatedly offered last week following an outcry from students and faculty members.

"How could I believe I'd be able to exert academic freedom with the school's largest donor so willing to disparage me publicly and attempt to pull the strings behind the scenes?" Hannah-Jones wrote in a statement. "Why would I want to teach at a university whose top leadership chose to remain silent, to refuse transparency, to fail to publicly advocate that I be treated like every other Knight Chair before me?"

The donations announced Tuesday — \$5 million each from the MacArthur, Knight and Ford foundations and an anonymous donor — will also bring award-winning author Ta-Nehisi Coates to Howard, a historically Black school in the nation's capital and his alma mater, as the Sterling Brown Chair in the Department of English.

It's a large gift for journalism, and one that points to a growing philanthropic effort to diversify news organizations and strengthen journalistic standards.

"It is important in a democracy like America, that journalism reflects America," said Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation. "The community of people who are producing news and information needs to look like America, if journalism is to be credible. ... And it's not just Black journalists. It's the diverse array of journalists. It's journalists who have a disability, and journalists who live in small towns and rural America."

In the past five years, the Ford Foundation has given more than \$77 million to various media diversification initiatives in the U.S., including to minority journalism groups and research projects centered on newsroom diversity, Walker said.

"What happened at UNC is deeply regrettable," he said.

At Howard, Hannah-Jones has "accepted something that is more meaningful and more valuable to her. That allows her to have both her dignity and values affirmed," Walker said.

The new center will attempt to tackle the lack of racial diversity in many newsrooms and senior management. A 2018 report from the Pew Research Center found that 77% of newsroom employees were white, compared to 65% for U.S. workers overall. And according to a 2019 survey of 428 news organizations from the News Leaders Association, only 18.8% of newsroom managers were from racial minorities.

"It is clear that within journalism, as in other fields, there are too few people of color in positions of lead-

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ership," said John Palfrey, the president of the MacArthur Foundation. "And one of the things philanthropy can do is, support institutions, like Howard University, that are correcting that imbalance."

So when Hannah-Jones approached the foundations with a vision of what the funding could do at Howard, they were happy to pitch in.

Before pledging its \$5 million donation to support Howard's center, the MacArthur Foundation already intended to support the next phase of Hannah-Jones' 1619 Project — a New York Times Magazine endeavor focusing on America's history of slavery. In addition to winning a Pulitzer Prize for her work on the project, Hannah-Jones was a recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, also known as the "genius grant."

The best way to fund Hannah-Jones' ongoing work was to "join with the Ford Foundation and Knight Foundation, and to make a larger grant than we anticipated to the new Howard center," Palfrey said. "This was certainly an unplanned grant. But it struck us as an unusually wonderful opportunity to support Black journalism."

The \$5 million grant from the Knight Foundation, the third funder, will include a \$500,000 investment to launch a symposium that aims to strengthen the teaching of journalism across various historically Black colleges and universities, according to a statement from the foundation, which has an endowed chair of journalism at Florida A&M University, which is also a historically Black college.

The newly announced gifts add to the estimated \$1 billion in philanthropic funding that has been given to journalism-related initiatives in the U.S. during the past five years, according to preliminary data from the philanthropy research organization Candid. One large gift of \$20 million is rare for the industry, but it's not unheard of.

The Knight First Amendment Institute, which defends the freedoms of speech and the press, was established in 2016 at Columbia University with a \$30 million gift from the Knight Foundation.

With Hannah-Jones' departure, there are two vacant Knight Chairs at UNC-Chapel Hill. The Knight Foundation does not plan to cut ties with the school, despite the controversy surrounding her extended tenure fight, which was marked by allegations of racism and a conservative backlash to her work.

"The Knight Chair at UNC-Chapel Hill is endowed in perpetuity," the director of the foundation's journalism program, Karen Rundlet, said in an emailed statement. "Our goal is to fund endowed chairs to enable universities to hire people, who in their judgment, are distinguished in the field of journalism and bring newsroom experience to the classroom. UNC Chapel Hill has been a leader in journalism education. We will continue to support UNC's efforts to independently hire Knight Chairs."

The tenure dispute shows there is a growing confusion about philanthropy, said Tammy Greer, an assistant professor of political science at Clark Atlanta University.

"Philanthropy is just like every other organization inside of these United States," she said. "We often think of philanthropy as progressive in its social programs, in environmental programs. However, philanthropy can also be conservative, and you see a rise of 501c3s that are conservative leaning and that are now using the laws associated with charitable organizations in order for them to advance their conservative causes."

Craig Newmark, the founder of Craigslist and Craig Newmark Philanthropies, which donated \$20 million to the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism in 2018, called on major donors of all sorts to support the program at Howard and similar programs across the country to strengthen journalism.

He said it is a national security issue that so much disinformation is being spread in the country and that clear journalism from diverse sources is a way to defend the country.

"What's being done at Howard is a big deal," Newmark said. "We need to work together more. This is protecting the country, protecting the democracy. It should be all hands on deck."

Paul carries Suns past Giannis, Bucks in NBA Finals opener

By BRIAN MAHONEY AP Basketball Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — Chris Paul waited 16 years to get to the NBA Finals, bringing with him a team starving for its first championship.

The setting was entirely new.

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The performance was same ol' Chris Paul.

"Just knew he's ready," Phoenix forward Mikal Bridges said. "He's prepared his whole life for this moment and it shows out there on the court."

Paul had 32 points and nine assists in an NBA Finals debut that was well worth the wait, Devin Booker scored 27 points and the Suns beat the returning Giannis Antetokounmpo and his Milwaukee Bucks 118-105 on Tuesday night in Game 1.

Paul scored 16 points during a sensational third quarter that had Phoenix fans who waited 28 years to see the NBA Finals again screaming in delight.

"Every time he shoots it we think it's going in," Booker said.

It almost did in the third quarter, when Paul was 6 for 7 and made all three 3-pointers.

Finally playing for the title in his 16th season, the star point guard has the Suns in the NBA Finals for only the third time, and it sure looked as if they could make this ending different than the other two.

"We've been building all season long for these moments," Paul said. "We're going to keep playing. This is just one game. We've got to stay locked in."

Deandre Ayton added 22 points and 19 rebounds to continue his breakout stretch of play in his first postseason.

Antetokounmpo had 20 points and 17 rebounds after missing two games with a hyperextended left knee. Khris Middleton scored 29 points, but the Bucks will have to play from behind again after dropping Game 1 for the third straight series.

"We know it's not going to be easy. We know it's going to be tough," Middleton said. "There's times where we're going to be down in this series. But this series isn't over. We're down. We've still got to keep competing and just playing."

The series opener was the first NBA Finals game in Phoenix since Michael Jordan's Chicago Bulls won their third straight championship here in Game 6 in 1993. The Suns, who came into the NBA with the Bucks in 1968, made their only other finals appearance in 1976.

They hadn't even made the playoffs since 2010 and just two years ago were last in the Western Conference with a 19-63 record.

But Booker was already headed for stardom by then, and 2018 No. 1 pick Ayton has played at that level in the postseason. Paul has been steady as always since his arrival in an offseason trade.

Now 36 and a 10-time All-NBA selection, he is on the list of best players to never win a championship. It appeared he might never even get to play for one until Oklahoma City dealt him to a team of Suns on the rise, and he might be the final piece that takes them all the way to the top.

Despite so many debuts on the finals stage — the Suns' Jae Crowder was the only player who had appeared in them, and that was for Miami at a neutral site last year — there didn't appear to be many first-time jitters.

But Paul shifted the Suns into another gear in the third. His opening jumper provided the first double-digit lead of the game, and he followed with a four-point play for the Suns' next basket.

He scored eight straight Phoenix points later in the period, hitting a 3-pointer, dancing around Bobby Portis for a layup and then hitting another 3. He then fired a pass to Ayton, who was fouled and made both free throws to make it 88-68 with 2:20 left.

"Their pick-and-roll game is tough to guard," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "I think we've just got to keep getting better. We'll look at the film. We'll see how we can maybe take away some of the rhythm."

The Bucks cut it down to seven near the midpoint of the fourth before Paul helped the Suns restore a safe margin. He found Booker for a 3-pointer, stole the ball from Middleton and then hit a jumper to make it 106-94.

Milwaukee also is making its third finals appearance, having won the title in 1971 but not getting another chance since losing in 1974. The Bucks got a boost for this appearance when Antetokounmpo worked his way back quickly from an injury that looked serious when it happened.

The two-time MVP missed the final two games of the Eastern Conference finals. He was listed as doubtful

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for the opener, but he was upgraded to questionable Tuesday and then inserted into the starting lineup after he worked out on the court before the game.

"I'm just happy that I'm out there and I'm able to help my team in any way possible and participate in my first NBA Finals," Antetokounmpo said.

The Bucks threw a lob to Antetokounmpo on their first possession — a play similar to the one he was defending when he was injured in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals against Atlanta — and he seemed to attack the basket just as forcefully as always.

But Jrue Holiday, who played so well while Antetokounmpo was out, shot just 4 for 14 and scored 10 points.

TIP-INS

Bucks: The Bucks said they had 9,000 fans watching the game inside Fiserv Forum and 20,000 outside in the Deer District. ... Brook Lopez scored 17 points.

Suns: Ayton, who came in shooting 70.6% in the postseason, was 8 for 10. ... Bridges scored 14 points. ... The Suns are 4-0 in Game 1s in this postseason. ... Reserve forward Dario Saric missed the second half with a right knee injury.

HAPPY TO BE HOME

The Bucks coach used to be a Suns fan.

Budenholzer is from Holbrook, Arizona, about three hours from Phoenix. He said his parents and other family members would be at the game.

POSTSEASON PAST

This isn't the first postseason matchup between the Bucks and Suns. Milwaukee was formerly in the Western Conference and beat Phoenix in the first round of the 1978 playoffs.

Britney Spears' court-appointed attorney resigns

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Britney Spears' court-appointed attorney on Tuesday filed documents to resign from her conservatorship, the latest of several such moves that have come in the fallout from the pop singer's comments in court decrying the legal arrangement that controls her money and affairs.

Samuel Ingham III filed documents in Los Angeles Superior Court requesting that the court appoint Spears a new attorney, and saying his resignation would take effect as soon as that happened.

During her June 23 speech in court, in which she condemned the conservatorship and asked Judge Brenda Penny to end it, Spears was critical of Ingham, and said she wished the court would allow her to hire a lawyer of her choice.

Last week, Bessemer Trust, the estate-management company that Spears had requested replace her father as conservator of her finances, filed its own documents withdrawing from the case. The filing said that circumstances had changed after Spears' comments in court on June 23.

At a hearing in November, Penny denied Spears' request to have her father replaced entirely, but said James Spears and Bessemer Trust could work together as co-conservators of her finances.

And on Monday, in a letter obtained by entertainment industry publication Deadline, Britney Spears' longtime manager Larry Rudolph also resigned, saying she had no intention of resuming her career after a 2 1/2 year hiatus that has left him with no work to do for her.

A veteran probate attorney, Ingham was for years a largely silent figure in the conservatorship, at least publicly, but became a more vocal advocate for Britney Spears starting last year. His statements in court that she feared her father and would not resume her career so long as he had power over it were an early crack in the presumed consensus among the figures involved in the conservatorship.

At the June 23 hearing, Ingham said that Britney Spears had not asked him to file a petition to end the conservatorship, but said he expected she might do so soon. In her remarks critical of Ingham, Spears said during the hearing that she hadn't known she could file such a petition, and she still has not.

Australia's largest city Sydney locks down for third week

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Sydney's two-week lockdown has been extended for another week due to the vulnerability of an Australia population largely unvaccinated against COVID-19, officials said on Wednesday.

"The situation we're in now is largely because we haven't been able to get the vaccine that we need," New South Wales state Health Minister Brad Hazzard said.

The decision to extend the lockdown through July 16 was made on health advice, state Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

"The reason why we've extended the lockdown is because of a number of cases still infectious in the community and we extended the lockdown to give us the best chance of not having another lockdown," Berejiklian said.

The extension of the lockdown, which covers Australia's largest city and some nearby communities, means most children will not return to school next week following their midyear break.

Of 27 new infections of the delta variant reported in latest 24-hour period on Wednesday, only 13 had been in isolation while infectious, officials said. The delta variant is considered more contagious than the original coronavirus or other variants.

Only 9% of Australian adults are fully vaccinated, heightening fears that the delta variant could quickly spread beyond control.

Berejiklian expected lockdowns would no longer be necessary once a large majority of Australians were vaccinated.

There have been more than 300 infections linked to a limousine driver who tested positive on June 16. He is thought to have been infected while transporting a U.S. flight crew from Sydney airport.

Last week, almost half Australia's population was locked down with cities on the east, west and north coasts tightening pandemic restrictions due to clusters. Some of those lockdowns were as short as three days.

Sydney and its surrounds are the only part of Australia still in lockdown.

Australia has been relatively successful in containing clusters throughout the pandemic, registering fewer than 31,000 cases and 910 deaths total.

Australia has recorded a single COVID-19 death since October: an 80-year-old man who died in April after being infected overseas and diagnosed in hotel quarantine.

But now there are 37 COVID-19 cases in Sydney hospitals. Of those, seven are in intensive care, the youngest in their 30s.

In hunt for infrastructure deal, every Dem has leverage

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a crucial moment for Democrats, party leaders are hunting for a sweet spot that would satisfy their rival moderate and progressive wings on legislation to finance President Joe Biden's multitrillion-dollar agenda of bolstering the economy and helping families.

With virtually no votes to spare and saber rattling by both Democratic factions, leaders are finding their search for middle ground arduous — even though the president's push for infrastructure projects and family-centered initiatives is his top domestic priority.

With Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., winning the spotlight this year for pulling his party rightward by issuing demands on crucial issues, plenty of centrists and liberals are now using that same playbook. In a procession of meetings with White House officials and congressional budget writers, progressives have insisted that the emerging measures be big and aggressive, while moderates want them to be far more modest.

"We're all Joe Manchin right now," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Yarmuth of Kentucky.

The leverage every Democrat has flows from simple arithmetic. Expecting unanimous Republican opposition to much of Biden's package, they need total unity in the 50-50 Senate — plus Vice President Kamala Harris' tie-breaking vote — and can lose only a very few House votes.

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With trillions in spending at their disposal, Democratic leaders have plenty of options for designing programs that appeal to lawmakers' hometown interests to win votes. More broadly, however, the intraparty fight pits two ideologies against each other — progressives' eagerness to help needy families, moderates seeking to do so but with fiscal constraints — and their differences are real.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., recently floated an enormous \$6 trillion proposal for infrastructure, climate change, health care and other programs that many progressives love. It goes well beyond Biden's vision of spending roughly \$4 trillion on similar projects. Manchin has said he wants to pare it back further, a view many moderate Democrats endorse but that progressives say would eviscerate the president's agenda.

Sanders is now immersed in talks with his panel's Democrats on finding a compromise on spending and offsetting revenues.

The party is hoping he can craft a budget resolution — the first step in Congress' creaky process for churning out spending and tax bills — that Democrats can push through the Senate and House this month. Lawmakers would likely work on detailed bills actually providing the funds and revenue this fall.

Lawmakers, aides and lobbyists say Sanders is running into resistance from moderates and will be lucky to come close to even Biden's \$4 trillion. And while moderates and progressives have generally refrained from sniping and publicly drawing lines in the sand, they're not bashful about voicing their views.

Among centrists, Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., has said he'll oppose his party's budget and subsequent progressive-backed legislation financing programs aimed at families, telling the Capitol Hill publication Roll Call that's he's concerned about excessive spending. Rep. Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J., a leader of the House's bipartisan Problem Solvers group, calls Sanders' \$6 trillion "very aggressive." And Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., a leader of the moderate New Democrat Coalition, said he wants to help families and businesses without "building castles in the sky."

Progressives are just as assertive. To maintain leverage, they're demanding that Congress not approve a bipartisan Senate compromise providing \$1.2 trillion for roads, pipelines and other infrastructure projects until there's also a second bill providing additional money for health care, housing and other programs, which is unlikely to win GOP votes.

That strategy has won support from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., with Biden also favoring the two-track approach. But moderates anxious to notch an infrastructure win and less wedded to a huge, separate bill expanding family-centered programs are pushing back, saying they want Congress to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill as soon as this month.

Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla., co-chair of House Democrats' centrist Blue Dog Coalition, says she thinks there will be enough votes to quickly approve the infrastructure measure. "And when you have the votes you should take the vote," she said.

Countering that, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, says "dozens" of her group's nearly 100 members say they won't vote for the bipartisan infrastructure bill unless the separate package of health care and other family-oriented programs also moves.

"Our leverage is saying we're not going to be able to pass a piece of legislation unless you do the other one" for families, said Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., the progressive group's vote counter.

The progressive caucus has said it wants five priorities included in the legislation: health care, housing, child care and other family benefits, climate change and helping millions of immigrants become citizens.

Moderates have voiced general support for health care, family benefits and other progressive priorities. But some have suggested, often without detail, downsizing liberals' costly proposals like expanding Medicare coverage to people as young as age 60. They cite concerns about higher prices that some say federal spending could ignite.

"There's this 'I' word out there that's called inflation," said Rep. Lou Correa, D-Calif., a member of House Democrats' Blue Dogs.

Besides setting spending and revenue targets, a budget will be make-or-break for Democrats because under congressional rules, it would let them prevent Republicans from using Senate filibusters to kill later

legislation actually providing the money for Biden's plans. Filibusters, or endless procedural delays, take 60 votes to overcome, a nearly insurmountable obstacle in today's hyper-partisan Congress.

Democrats control the House 220-211 with four vacancies and can lose no more than four of their votes to pass bills. That number will shrink to just three after a Texas runoff late this month in which both remaining candidates are Republicans.

"Everybody needs to advocate as clear as possible for their priorities," said Yarmuth, the House budget chairman. "But everybody ultimately has to vote for whatever comes up, or we get nothing."

Pentagon cancels disputed JEDI cloud contract with Microsoft

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon said it canceled a disputed cloud-computing contract with Microsoft that could eventually have been worth \$10 billion. It will instead pursue a deal with both Microsoft and Amazon and possibly other cloud service providers.

"With the shifting technology environment, it has become clear that the JEDI Cloud contract, which has long been delayed, no longer meets the requirements to fill the DoD's capability gaps," the Pentagon said in a statement Tuesday.

The statement did not directly mention that the Pentagon faced extended legal challenges by Amazon to the original \$1 billion contract awarded to Microsoft. Amazon argued that the Microsoft award was tainted by politics, particularly then-President Donald Trump's antagonism toward Amazon founder, Jeff Bezos, who stepped down Monday as the company's chief executive officer. Bezos owns The Washington Post, a newspaper often criticized by Trump.

The Pentagon's chief information officer, John Sherman, told reporters Tuesday that during the lengthy legal fight with Amazon, "the landscape has evolved" with new possibilities for large-scale cloud computing services. Thus it was decided, he said, to start over and seek multiple vendors.

Sherman said JEDI will be replaced by a new program called Joint Warfighter Cloud Capability, and that both Amazon and Microsoft "likely" will be awarded parts of the business, although neither is guaranteed. Sherman said the three other large cloud service providers — Google, IBM and Oracle — might qualify, too.

Microsoft said in response to the Pentagon announcement, "We understand the DoD's rationale, and we support them and every military member who needs the mission-critical 21st century technology JEDI would have provided. The DoD faced a difficult choice: Continue with what could be a years-long litigation battle or find another path forward."

Amazon said it understands and agrees with the Pentagon's decision. In a statement, the company reiterated its view that the 2019 contract award was not based on the merits of the competing proposals "and instead was the result of outside influence that has no place in government procurement."

Oracle, which had earlier sought the JEDI contract but didn't make it to the final round, declined comment Tuesday. In separate statements, IBM said it was evaluating the new Pentagon approach and Google said it looked forward to discussing it with Pentagon officials.

The JEDI project began with the \$1 billion contract award for Microsoft, meant as an initial step in a 10-year deal that could have reached \$10 billion in value. The project that will replace it is a five-year program; Sherman said no exact contract value has been set but that it will be "in the billions." Sherman said the government will negotiate the amount Microsoft will be paid for having its 2019 deal terminated.

Amazon Web Services, a market leader in providing cloud computing services, had long been considered a leading candidate to run the Pentagon's Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure project, known as JEDI. The project was meant to store and process vast amounts of classified data, allowing the U.S. military to improve communications with soldiers on the battlefield and use artificial intelligence to speed up its war planning and fighting capabilities.

The JEDI contract became mired in legal challenges almost as soon as it was awarded to Microsoft in October 2019. The losing bidder, Amazon Web Services, went to court arguing that the Pentagon's process was flawed and unfair, including that it was improperly influenced by politics.

This year the Pentagon had been hinting that it might scrap the contract, saying in May that it felt compelled to reconsider its options after a federal judge in April rejected a Pentagon move to have key parts of Amazon's lawsuit dismissed.

The JEDI saga has been unusual for the political dimension linked to Trump. In April 2020, the Defense Department inspector general's office concluded that the contracting process was in line with legal and government purchasing standards. The inspector general found no evidence of White House interference in the contract award process, but that review also said investigators could not fully review the matter because the White House would not allow unfettered access to witnesses.

Five months later, the Pentagon reaffirmed Microsoft as winner of the contract, but work remained stalled by Amazon's legal challenge.

In its April 2020 report, the inspector general's office did not draw a conclusion about whether the Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft Corp. was appropriately declared the winner. Rather, it looked at whether the decision-making process was proper and legal. It also examined allegations of unethical behavior by Pentagon officials involved in the matter and generally determined that any ethical lapses did not influence the outcome.

That review did not find evidence of White House pressure for the Pentagon to favor the Microsoft bid, but it also said it could not definitely determine the full extent of White House interactions with the Pentagon's decision makers.

Biden: US damage appears minimal in big ransomware attack

By FRANK BAJAK and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden said Tuesday that damage to U.S. businesses in the biggest ransomware attack on record appears minimal, though information remained incomplete. The company whose software was exploited said fewer than 1,500 businesses worldwide appeared compromised but cybersecurity experts caution that the incident isn't over.

Also Tuesday, a security researcher who chatted online with representatives of the Russia-linked REvil gang behind the attack said they claimed to have stolen data from hundreds of companies, but offered no evidence.

Answering a reporter's question at a vaccine-related White House event, Biden said his national security team had updated him Tuesday morning on the attack, which exploited a powerful remote-management tool run by Miami-based software company Kaseya in what is known as a supply-chain attack.

"It appears to have caused minimal damage to U.S. businesses but we're still gathering information," Biden said. "And I'm going to have more to say about this in the next several days." An official at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, speaking on condition they not be further identified, said no federal agencies or critical infrastructure appear to have been impacted.

On Wednesday, Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will lead an interagency meeting to discuss the administration's efforts to counter ransomware.

White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki held out the prospect of retaliatory action. What Biden told President Vladimir Putin in Geneva last month still holds, she said: "If the Russian government cannot or will not take action against criminal actors residing in Russia, we will take action or reserve the right to take action on our own."

What sort of action that would be is unclear.

Biden has said repeatedly that the Kremlin bears responsibility for giving ransomware criminals safe harbor, even if it is not directly involved. There is no indication that Putin has moved against the gangs. Psaki said Russian and U.S. representatives were meeting next week and would discuss the matter.

Further underscoring the geopolitical stakes in cyberspace, the Republican National Committee said Tuesday that it had been informed over the weekend that one of its contractors had been breached, though it was not immediately clear by whom. The RNC said no data was accessed.

The contractor, Synnex, initially said that the action "could potentially be in connection with the recent

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cybersecurity attacks of Managed Service Providers," a likely reference to the breaches last week. But it backed away from that claim in a second statement late Tuesday.

Friday's attack hobbled businesses in at least 17 countries. It shuttered most of the 800 supermarkets in the Swedish Coop chain over the weekend because cash registers stopped working, and reportedly knocked more than 100 New Zealand kindergartens offline.

Kaseya said it believes only about 800 to 1,500 of the estimated 800,000 to 1,000,000 mostly small business end-users of its software were affected. They are customers of companies that use Kaseya's virtual system administrator, or VSA, product to fully manage their IT infrastructure.

Cybersecurity experts said, however, it is too early for Kaseya to know the true impact given its launch on the eve of the Fourth of July holiday weekend in the U.S. They said many targets might only discover it upon returning to work Tuesday.

Ransomware criminals infiltrate networks and sow malware that cripples them by scrambling all their data. Victims get a decoder key when they pay up. Most ransomware victims don't publicly report attacks or disclose if they've paid ransoms. In the U.S, disclosure of a breach is required by state laws when personal data that can be used in identity theft is stolen. Federal law mandates it when healthcare records are exposed.

Security researchers said that in this attack, the criminals did not appear to have had time to steal data before locking up networks. That raised the question whether the motivation behind the attack was profit alone, because extortion through threatening to expose sensitive pilfered data betters the odds of big payoffs.

But Ryan Sherstobitoff, threat intelligence chief of the cybersecurity firm Security Scorecard, said REvil representatives claimed Saturday to have stolen data from hundreds of companies and were threatening to sell it if ransom demands of up to \$5 million for bigger victims — they were seeking \$45,000 per infected computer — were not met.

"The operators are claiming that, though there is not necessarily direct evidence," added Sherstobitoff, who said he masqueraded as a victim to engage the criminals. He said the criminals claimed banks were among victims.

REvil offered a universal software decoder to free all victims in exchange for a lump sum payment of \$50 million, he added. On Sunday, that sum rose to \$70 million in a post on the criminals' dark web site.

Analysts say the chaos ransomware criminals have wrought in the past year — hitting hospitals, schools, local governments and other targets at the rate of about one every eight minutes — serves Putin's strategic agenda of destabilizing the West.

Most of the more than 60 Kaseya customers that company spokeswoman Dana Liedholm said were affected are managed service providers (MSPs), with multiple customers downstream.

"Given the relationship between Kaseya and MSPs, it's not clear how Kaseya would know the number of victims impacted. There is no way the numbers are as low as Kaseya is claiming though," said Jake Williams, chief technical officer of the cybersecurity firm BreachQuest. Others researchers also questioned Kaseya's visibility into crippled managed service providers.

The hacked VSA tool remotely maintains customer networks, automating security and other software updates. Essentially, a product designed to protect networks from malware was cleverly used to distribute it.

In an interview on Sunday, Kaseya CEO Fred Voccola estimated the number of victims in "the low thousands." The German news agency dpa had reported that an unnamed German IT services company told authorities that several thousand of its customers were compromised. Also among reported victims were two Dutch IT services companies.

A broad array of businesses and public agencies were hit, apparently on all continents, including in financial services, travel and leisure and the public sector — though few large companies, the cybersecurity firm Sophos said.

Liedholm, the Kaseya spokeswoman, said the vast majority of the company's 37,000 customers were unaffected and said the company expected to release a patch Wednesday.

REvil, previously best known for extorting \$11 million from the meat-processing giant JBS after hob-

bling it on Memorial Day, broke into at least one Kaseya server after identifying a "zero day" vulnerability, cybersecurity researchers said.

Dutch researchers said they alerted Kaseya to the zero day and a number of "severe vulnerabilities" ahead of the attack. Neither they nor Kaseya would say how far in advance.

Eric Adams wins Democratic primary in NYC's mayoral race

By KAREN MATTHEWS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams has won the Democratic primary for mayor of New York City after appealing to the political center and promising to strike the right balance between fighting crime and ending racial injustice in policing.

A former police captain, Adams would be the city's second Black mayor if elected.

He triumphed over a large Democratic field in New York's first major race to use ranked choice voting. Results from the latest tabulations released Tuesday showed him leading former city sanitation commissioner Kathryn Garcia by 8,426 votes, or a little more than 1 percentage point.

"While there are still some very small amounts of votes to be counted, the results are clear: an historic, diverse, five-borough coalition led by working-class New Yorkers has led us to victory in the Democratic primary for mayor of New York," Adams said in a statement.

He said he was running to "deliver on the promise of this great city for those who are struggling, who are underserved, and who are committed to a safe, fair, affordable future for all New Yorkers."

Adams will be the prohibitive favorite in the general election against Curtis Sliwa, the Republican founder of the Guardian Angels. Democrats outnumber Republicans 7-to-1 in New York City.

Adams' closest vanquished Democratic rivals included Garcia, who campaigned as a technocrat and proven problem-solver, and former City Hall legal advisor Maya Wiley, who had progressive support including an endorsement from U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Andrew Yang, the 2020 presidential candidate known for his proposed universal basic income, was an early favorite but faded in the race.

Voting in the primary ended June 22. Early returns showed Adams in the lead, but New Yorkers had to wait for tens of thousands of absentee ballots to be counted and for rounds of tabulations done under the new ranked choice system.

Under the system, voters ranked up to five candidates for mayor in order of preference. Candidates with too few votes to win were eliminated and ballots cast for them redistributed to the surviving contenders, based on the voter preference, until only two were left.

The city's first experience with the system in a major election was bumpy. As votes were being tallied on June 29, elections officials bungled the count by inadvertently including 135,000 old test ballots. Erroneous vote tallies were posted for several hours before officials acknowledged the error and took them down.

The mistake had no impact on the final outcome of the race.

Adams, Garcia and Wiley all filed lawsuits last week seeking the right to review the ranked choice tally.

Wiley said in a statement Tuesday that the board "must be completely remade following what can only be described as a debacle." As for herself, she said her campaign would have more to say soon about "next steps."

Garcia's campaign issued no immediate response to Tuesday's vote tally, but said she would be making a statement Wednesday morning.

Adams, 60, is a moderate Democrat who opposed the "defund the police" movement.

"We're not going to recover as a city if we turn back time and see an increase in violence, particularly gun violence," Adams said after three people including a 4-year-old girl were shot and wounded in Times Square in May.

"If Black lives really matter, it can't only be against police abuse. It has to be against the violence that's ripping apart our communities," he told supporters the night of the primary.

But Adams is a study in contradictions who at different times has been a defender of Nation of Islam

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leader Louis Farrakhan, a registered Republican and a Democratic state senator thriving in a world of backroom deals.

Adams speaks frequently of his dual identity as a 22-year police veteran and a Black man who endured police brutality himself as a teenager. He said he was beaten by officers at age 15.

Adams became a police officer in 1984 and rose to the rank of captain before leaving to run for the state Senate in 2006.

While in the police department, he co-founded 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, a group that campaigned for criminal justice reform and against racial profiling.

After winning a state Senate seat from Brooklyn in 2006, Adams made an impression with an impassioned speech favoring same-sex marriage rights in 2009, two years before New York's state legislators passed a marriage equality bill.

Adams also weathered a few controversies, including a 2010 report from the state inspector general that faulted his oversight of the bidding process to bring casino gambling to the Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens. Adams had accepted campaign contributions from a politically connected group bidding for the gambling franchise.

Adams was elected in 2013 as Brooklyn borough president, his current job.

Adams is a vegan who credits a plant-based diet with reversing his diabetes. He has a 25-year-old son, Jordan Coleman, with a former girlfriend. His current partner is Tracey Collins, an educator who holds an administrative job in the city's public school system.

Journalists raised questions during the race about where Adams lived. He was born in Brooklyn, walked the beat there as a cop, owns real estate there and represented it in the state Senate. But he slept in his office in Brooklyn Borough Hall for months during the pandemic and opponents noted that he shares a place with his partner in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

Adams gave reporters a tour of a basement apartment in Brooklyn that he said was his primary residence.

Adams can be a charismatic speaker but has also made cringe-worthy utterances, such as his 1993 suggestion that Herman Badillo, a Puerto Rican-born politician, should have married a Latina instead of a white, Jewish woman.

Speaking at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day event last year, Adams complained about gentrifiers moving to the city from elsewhere.

"Go back to Iowa. You go back to Ohio," Adams said. "New York City belongs to the people that were here and made New York City what it is."

Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, was barred by the city charter from seeking a third term.

Searchers at collapse site 'not seeing anything positive'

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

SURFSIDE, Fla. (AP) — Officials overseeing the search at the site of the Florida condominium collapse sounded increasingly somber Tuesday about the prospects for finding anyone alive, saying they have detected no new signs of life in the rubble as the death toll climbed to 36.

Crews in yellow helmets and blue jumpsuits searched the debris for a 13th day while wind and rain from the outer bands of Hurricane Elsa complicated their efforts. Video released by the Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department showed workers lugging pickaxes and power saws through piles of concrete rubble barbed with snapped steel rebar. Other searchers could be seen digging with gloved hands through pulverized concrete and dumping shovels of debris into large buckets.

Search-and-rescue workers continued to look for open spaces where people might be found alive nearly two weeks after the disaster struck at the Champlain Towers South building in Surfside.

"We're actively searching as aggressively as we can," Miami-Dade County Fire Chief Alan Cominsky said at a news conference. But he added: "Unfortunately, we are not seeing anything positive. The key things — void spaces, living spaces — we're not seeing anything like that."

Reporters got their closest look at the site Tuesday, though it was limited to the portion of the build-

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ing that demolition workers tore down Sunday after the initial collapse left it standing but dangerously unstable. A pile of shattered concrete and twisted steel stood about 30 feet (9 meters) tall, topped by a couple of air conditioning units, and spanned roughly half the length of a football field. A pair of backhoes pulled rubble off the pile, which blocked any view of the search effort.

While officials still call the efforts a search-and-rescue operation, Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava said families of those still missing are preparing for news of "tragic loss." She said President Joe Biden, who visited the area last week, called Tuesday to offer his continued support.

"I think everybody will be ready when it's time to move to the next phase," said Levine Cava, who stressed that crews would use the same care as they go through the rubble even after their focus shifts from searching for survivors to recovering the dead.

"Really, you will not see a difference," she said. "We will carefully search for bodies and belongings, and to catalog and respectfully deal with any remains that we find."

No one has been rescued alive since the first hours after the collapse, which struck early on June 24, when many of the building's residents were asleep.

Officials announced Tuesday that teams had recovered eight additional bodies — the highest one-day total since the collapse. More than 100 people remain unaccounted for.

Severe weather from Elsa threatened to hinder search efforts. Lightning forced rescuers to pause their work for two hours early Tuesday, Miami-Dade Assistant Fire Chief Raide Jadallah said. And stiff winds of 20 mph (32 kph), with stronger gusts, hampered efforts to move heavy debris with cranes, officials said.

However, the storm's heaviest winds and rain were expected to bypass Surfside and neighboring Miami as Elsa strengthened before making landfall somewhere between Tampa Bay and Florida's Big Bend on a path across northern Florida.

"Active search and rescue continued throughout the night, and these teams continue through extremely adverse and challenging conditions," Levine Cava said. "Through the rain and through the wind, they have continued searching."

Crews have removed 124 tons (112 metric tonnes) of debris from the site, Cominsky said. The debris was being sorted and stored in a warehouse as potential evidence in the investigation into why the building collapsed, officials said.

Workers have been freed to search a broader area since the weekend demolition of the unstable remaining portion of the condo building. Officials said that gave rescuers access to spaces that were previously closed off, including bedrooms where people were believed to be sleeping at the time of the disaster.

Officials: Storm lashing Florida strengthens into hurricane

By CURT ANDERSON and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A storm that has lashed the Caribbean and the Florida Keys with pounding rain and gusty winds and complicated the search for survivors in a deadly condominium collapse has strengthened into a hurricane.

The National Weather Service said Tuesday that Hurricane Elsa was packing winds as high as 75 mph (121 kph) as it hurtled toward Florida's northern Gulf Coast. The Category 1 storm is expected to make landfall between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. Wednesday, somewhere between the Tampa Bay area and the Big Bend region.

In addition to damaging winds and heavy rains, the Miami-based U.S. National Hurricane Center warned of life-threatening storm surges, flooding and isolated tornadoes. A hurricane warning has been issued for a long stretch of coastline, from Egmont Key at the mouth of Tampa Bay to the Steinhatchee River in Florida's Big Bend area. Landfall was expected somewhere in between.

The Tampa area is highly vulnerable to storm surge because the offshore waters and Tampa Bay are quite shallow, experts say. Gov. Ron DeSantis said the area would take a hard hit from the storm overnight.

Now is "not a time to joyride" because "we do have hazardous conditions out there," DeSantis said at a news conference Tuesday. The storm is expected to make landfall between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. Wednesday,

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he said.

Still, on the barrier island beach towns along the Gulf Coast, it was largely business as usual with few shutters or plywood boards going up early Tuesday. Free sandbags were being handed out at several locations, and a limited number of storm shelters opened Tuesday morning in at least four counties around the Tampa Bay area, although no evacuations have been ordered.

Nancy Brindley, 85, who lives in a seaside house built in 1923, said she has experienced 34 previous tropical cyclones and is not having shutters put on her windows. Her main concern is what will happen to sand on the adjacent beach and the dunes that protect her house and others. She's staying through the storm.

"The main concern here is, if it doesn't speed up and decides to stall, there will be enormous erosion," she said.

Friends Chris Wirtz, 47, and Brendan Peregrine, 44, were staying put at a beachfront inn with their families. Both are from Tampa, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) across the bay and have been through storms many times.

"Before we left, we knew it was coming," Wirtz said.

Others were taking no chances. Annie Jones, 51, has lived along the Gulf Coast her entire life. She was buying ice and food at a local grocery store in advance of the storm.

"I've seen this happen over the years and I decided to load up," Jones said.

Across the Tampa Bay region that's home to about 3.5 million people, events, government offices and schools were closing down early Tuesday in advance of the storm. Tampa International Airport shut down at 5 p.m.

Duke Energy, the main electric utility in the Tampa Bay area, said in a statement it has about 3,000 employees, contractors, tree specialists and support personnel ready to respond to power outages in the storm's aftermath. Additional crews are being brought in from other states served by Duke Energy. "We're trained and prepared, and we want to ensure our customers are safe and prepared for any impacts from the storm," said Todd Fountain, the utility's Florida storm director.

The fifth game of the Stanley Cup finals between the Tampa Bay Lightning and Montreal Canadiens, set for Wednesday night, will take place, Tampa Mayor Jane Castor said. The Lightning lead the NHL's championship series 3-1 and could clinch the title with a victory.

Bands of rain reached Surfside on Florida's Atlantic coast, soaking the rubble of the Champlain Towers South, which collapsed June 24, killing at least 36 people. Search and rescue crews have worked through rain in search of more than 100 others unaccounted for, although lightning forced rescuers to pause their work for two hours early Tuesday, officials said.

Its core was about 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of Tampa. It was continuing to move to the north at 14 mph (about 23 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center.

DeSantis expanded a state of emergency to cover 33 counties.

After Florida, forecasters predicted Elsa would hit coastal Georgia and South Carolina, portions of which were under a tropical storm warning.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp issued a state of emergency Tuesday affecting 92 counties in middle, south and southeast Georgia in preparation for the storm.

Elsa's westward shift spared the lower Florida Keys a direct hit, but the islands were still getting plenty of rain and wind Tuesday.

Cuban officials evacuated 180,000 people against the possibility of heavy flooding from a storm that already battered several Caribbean islands, killing at least three people.

Elsa is the earliest fifth-named storm on record, said Brian McNoldy, a hurricane researcher at the University of Miami.

Hunt for Capitol attackers still on 6 months after Jan. 6

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

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The first waves of arrests in the deadly siege at the U.S. Capitol focused on the easy targets. Dozens in the pro-Trump mob openly bragged about their actions on Jan. 6 on social media and were captured in shocking footage broadcast live by national news outlets.

But six months after the insurrection, the Justice Department is still hunting for scores of rioters, even as the first of more than 500 people already arrested have pleaded guilty. The struggle reflects the massive scale of the investigation and the grueling work still ahead for authorities in the face of an increasing effort by some Republican lawmakers to rewrite what happened that day.

In a statement Tuesday noting the six-month anniversary of the attack, President Joe Biden called on “people of goodwill and courage” — including Republicans and Democrats — “to stand up to the hate, the lies, and the extremism that led to this vicious attack, including determining what happened so that we can remember it and not bury it hoping we forget.”

Among those who still haven’t been caught: the person who planted two pipe bombs outside the offices of the Republican and Democratic national committees the night before the melee, as well as many people accused of attacks on law enforcement officers or violence and threats against journalists. The FBI website seeking information about those involved in the Capitol violence includes more than 900 pictures of roughly 300 people labeled “unidentified.”

Part of the problem is that authorities made very few arrests on Jan. 6. They were focused instead on clearing the building of members of the massive mob that attacked police, damaged historic property and combed the halls for lawmakers they threatened to kill. Federal investigators are forced to go back and hunt down participants.

The FBI has since received countless tips and pieces of digital media from the public. But a tip is only the first step of a painstaking process — involving things like search warrants and interviews — to confirm people’s identities and their presence at the insurrection in order to bring a case in court. And authorities have no record of many of the attackers because this was their first run-in with the law.

“Most of these people never showed up on the radar screen before,” said Frank Montoya Jr., a retired FBI special agent who led the bureau’s field offices in Seattle and Honolulu. “You watch the movies and a name comes up on the radar screen and they know all the aliases and the last place he ate dinner, all with a click of a button. Unfortunately, that’s not how it is in reality.”

The FBI has been helped by “sedition hunters,” or armchair detectives who have teamed up to identify some of the most elusive suspects, using crowdsourcing to pore over the vast trove of videos and photos from the assault.

Forrest Rogers, a business consultant who helped form a group of sedition hunters called “Deep State Dogs,” said the group has reported the possible identities of about 100 suspects to the FBI based on evidence it collected.

Sometimes, a distinctive article of clothing helps the group make a match. In one case, a woman carrying a unique iPhone case on Jan. 6 had been photographed with the same case at an earlier protest, Rogers said.

“It’s seeking justice,” he said. “This is something that’s unprecedented in the history of our country.” Rogers asked, “Where else have you had several thousands of people who commit a crime and then immediately disperse all over the United States?”

John Scott-Railton is a senior researcher at the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto who has been collaborating with journalists and others to identify suspects using digital clues. He said that while much is known about the “small fish” who committed crimes that day, a deeper understanding is needed of the actions of organized group leaders.

“We all need to be in a place where we can have conversations about what Jan. 6th was that go beyond a bunch of individuals motivated by a set of ideologies who showed up at the Capitol,” he said.

Those being sought include many accused of violent attacks on officers. One video released by the FBI shows an unidentified man attacking officers with a baton. In another, a man is seen ripping the gas mask off an officer who screamed in pain as he was being crushed into a doorway by the angry mob.

The FBI on Tuesday released 11 new videos of rioters attacking law enforcement officers and appealed for the public's help in identifying the suspects. More than 100 people already have been arrested on suspicion of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol.

In some cases, social media platforms have turned over incriminating posts that defendants tried to delete after their gleeful celebrations of the siege gave way to fears of being arrested. Often, the attackers' own family, friends or acquaintances tipped off authorities.

In one case, the FBI used facial comparison software to find a suspect on his girlfriend's Instagram account. Agents then went undercover, secretly recorded the man at work and got him on tape admitting to being in the crowd, which he described as "fun."

"The more of these people you identify — potentially through search warrants and social media communications — you're going to be able to identify others," said Tom O'Connor, who focused on counterterrorism as a special agent before leaving the bureau in 2019. "Those people who have been arrested will then be given the opportunity to cooperate and identify other persons involved."

The FBI has offered a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest of the person responsible for planting the pipe bombs in Washington on Jan. 5. Footage shows a person in a gray hooded sweatshirt, a mask and gloves appearing to place one of the explosives under a bench outside the Democratic National Committee and the person walking in an alley near the Republican National Committee before the bomb was placed there. It remains unclear whether the bombs were related to planning for the insurrection.

Justice Department officials say arresting everyone involved in the insurrection remains a top priority. Authorities recently arrested the 100th person accused of assaulting law enforcement as well as the first person accused of assaulting a member of the press — a man prosecutors say tackled a cameraman.

"They will find them," said Robert Anderson Jr., former executive assistant director of the FBI's Criminal, Cyber, Response, and Services Branch. "I don't care how long it takes. If they are looking for them, they will find them."

More than a dozen Jan. 6 defendants have pleaded guilty, including two members of the Oath Keepers militia group who admitted to conspiring with other extremists to block the certification of Biden's victory.

Most of the other plea deals reached so far are in cases where defendants were charged only with misdemeanors for illegally entering the Capitol. The only defendant who has been sentenced is an Indiana woman who pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor and was spared any time behind bars.

Sisters in Florida condo collapse buried in same coffin

By TERRY SPENCER and KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

SURFSIDE, Fla. (AP) — The bodies of two young sisters pulled from the rubble of a Florida condo building — so tiny that the 4 and 10-year-olds were placed in the same casket — were buried alongside their parents Tuesday, their white coffin draped with innocent pink and purple ribbons.

Lucia Guara, "Lulu bear," loved watching "Jeopardy" with her dad, dancing and doing yoga with her mother. Her baby sister, Emma, was the princess of the family, a natural artist, who enjoyed her dad's piggyback rides and cuddling with her mom, family member Digna Rodriguez said.

The hourlong funeral was held at the family's Catholic parish, St. Joseph, just three blocks from where the Champlain Towers South building partially collapsed, killing the Guara sisters, their parents, Marcus and Anaely Guara, and 32 others. More than 100 are still missing. Fighting heavy rains and winds from a tropical storm, rescuers continued digging through piles of pulverized concrete and twisted steel for a 13th day Tuesday in Surfside.

The now-razed condominium building overlooks the parking lot of the church where Emma was baptized in 2016 and Lucia had her first communion in 2019.

The Rev. Juan J. Sosa asked for continued prayers.

"We still have about 15 of our other parishioners missing," he said. The pastor reminded those in attendance that death does not define them, saying God's strength is always present, especially in trials.

Family members wiped away tears and clung to each other in emotional embraces throughout the ser-

vice, especially during the singing of "Amazing Grace" as the caskets were being carried out of the church at the end.

"May we all connect with family as Lucia would. May we all move with grace as Emma would. May we all be as devoted and loyal as Marcus and Anaely were," Rodriguez said.

Marcus Guara's cousin, Peter Milián, encouraged others to follow the family's example by fully embracing the present moment and loving those around them.

"This cooler than cool guy melted all over his daughters. He loved being a father," Milián said, describing how he proudly participated in Lucia's made-up news shows and Emma's obstacle courses.

A competitive athlete and successful salesman, Marcus, 52, enjoyed life's small pleasures the most, like walking on the beach with his family. Anaely was a thinker and problem solver, a protective mother who embraced Emma's creativity and was Lucia's role model, Rodriguez said.

Lucia had a fierce love for her extended family, and was a big-hearted child who easily connected with others. A few months ago, she stuffed all of her birthday and tooth fairy money into an envelope and asked her dad to send it to St. Jude Children's Hospital, saying, "They need it more than I do," her father posted on Facebook.

Milián said it was a blessing the family perished together.

"I truly believe God watched over them by not making them suffer without Lucia and Emma," he said.

No relay: Banned sprinter Richardson left off Olympic team

By EDDIE PELLIS and PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writers

Banned sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson was not on the Olympic roster released Tuesday by USA Track and Field, a decision that means the American champion's positive test for marijuana will cost her a chance at running on the relay team in Tokyo, in addition to her spot in the 100-meter individual race.

Richardson's positive test nullified her win at Olympic trials in Eugene, Oregon, last month and the spot that went with it for Tokyo in the 100. Her 30-day suspension will end before the start of the relays on Aug. 5, which left open the possibility she could win a medal as part of the 4x100 relay team.

But her name was missing from the 130-person roster USATF sent out. The federation had two discretionary picks beyond the top four finishers in the 100-meter final at trials but chose not to offer a spot to the 21-year-old sprinter, who was expected to challenge for Olympic gold.

Asked about how Richardson was taking the news, her agent, Renaldo Nehemiah, responded: "We haven't spoken about it at all. It was actually not a topic we focused on."

In a statement, USATF said it was "incredibly sympathetic toward Sha'Carri Richardson's extenuating circumstances" and "fully agrees" that international rules regarding marijuana should be reevaluated.

"So while our heartfelt understanding lies with Sha'Carri, we must also maintain fairness for all of the athletes who attempted to realize their dreams by securing a place on the U.S. Olympic Track & Field Team," the statement read.

In this case, that meant offering the remaining relay spots to the sixth- and seventh-place finishers, each of whom moved up in the pecking order after Richardson's DQ. They are English Gardner and Aleia Hobbs.

Richardson tested positive for a chemical found in marijuana after her victory on June 19. She said the stress of her biological mother's recent death combined with the pressure of preparing for trials led her to use the drug.

"I was definitely triggered and blinded by emotions, blinded by badness, and hurting, and hiding hurt," she said on NBC's "Today" show. "I know I can't hide myself, so in some type of way, I was trying to hide my pain."

Over the weekend, she sent out a pair of tweets: "All these perfect people that know how to live life, I'm glad I'm not one of them!" and "2022-2025 undefeated!"

Shortly after the 2012 Olympics, international regulators loosened restrictions on marijuana use, increasing the threshold for a positive test to a level designed to catch athletes only who were using it in the immediate hours before competition. Potential bans were reduced from two years to as little as the 30-day suspension that Richardson is serving.

But where some professional leagues, such as the NFL, NHL and NBA, have greatly reduced enforcement of marijuana rules, with the acknowledgement that the drug does not enhance performance, the Olympic world continues to test for and punish use in some circumstances. According to the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, in addition to substances that trigger performance enhancement, the banned list can include drugs that can pose health risks to athletes or violate the "spirit of sport."

It's a stance that has triggered a wide-ranging debate, largely in the realm of social media but also in Washington. Last week, President Joe Biden said that while he was proud of the way Richardson handled her ban, "the rules are the rules."

"Whether they should remain the rules is a different issue, but the rules are the rules," Biden said.

Meanwhile, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York tweeted out a letter she and Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland sent to the leaders of both the U.S. and world anti-doping agencies urging them to overturn the decision.

"Please strike a blow for civil liberties and civil rights by reversing this course you are on," the letter said.

Pentagon cancels disputed JEDI cloud contract with Microsoft

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon said Tuesday it canceled a disputed cloud-computing contract with Microsoft that could eventually have been worth \$10 billion. It will instead pursue a deal with both Microsoft and Amazon and possibly other cloud service providers.

"With the shifting technology environment, it has become clear that the JEDI Cloud contract, which has long been delayed, no longer meets the requirements to fill the DoD's capability gaps," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The statement did not directly mention that the Pentagon faced extended legal challenges by Amazon to the original \$1 billion contract awarded to Microsoft. Amazon argued that the Microsoft award was tainted by politics, particularly then-President Donald Trump's antagonism toward Amazon founder, Jeff Bezos, who stepped down Monday as the company's chief executive officer. Bezos owns The Washington Post, a newspaper often criticized by Trump.

The Pentagon's chief information officer, John Sherman, told reporters Tuesday that during the lengthy legal fight with Amazon, "the landscape has evolved" with new possibilities for large-scale cloud computing services. Thus it was decided, he said, to start over and seek multiple vendors.

Sherman said JEDI will be replaced by a new program called Joint Warfighter Cloud Capability, and that both Amazon and Microsoft "likely" will be awarded parts of the business, although neither is guaranteed. Sherman said the three other large cloud service providers — Google, IBM and Oracle — might qualify, too.

Microsoft said in response to the Pentagon announcement, "We understand the DoD's rationale, and we support them and every military member who needs the mission-critical 21st century technology JEDI would have provided. The DoD faced a difficult choice: Continue with what could be a years-long litigation battle or find another path forward."

Amazon said it understands and agrees with the Pentagon's decision. In a statement, the company reiterated its view that the 2019 contract award was not based on the merits of the competing proposals "and instead was the result of outside influence that has no place in government procurement."

Oracle, which had earlier sought the JEDI contract but didn't make it to the final round, declined comment Tuesday. In separate statements, IBM said it was evaluating the new Pentagon approach and Google said it looked forward to discussing it with Pentagon officials.

The JEDI project began with the \$1 billion contract award for Microsoft, meant as an initial step in a 10-year deal that could have reached \$10 billion in value. The project that will replace it is a five-year program; Sherman said no exact contract value has been set but that it will be "in the billions." Sherman said the government will negotiate the amount Microsoft will be paid for having its 2019 deal terminated.

Amazon Web Services, a market leader in providing cloud computing services, had long been considered a leading candidate to run the Pentagon's Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure project, known as JEDI.

The project was meant to store and process vast amounts of classified data, allowing the U.S. military to improve communications with soldiers on the battlefield and use artificial intelligence to speed up its war planning and fighting capabilities.

The JEDI contract became mired in legal challenges almost as soon as it was awarded to Microsoft in October 2019. The losing bidder, Amazon Web Services, went to court arguing that the Pentagon's process was flawed and unfair, including that it was improperly influenced by politics.

This year the Pentagon had been hinting that it might scrap the contract, saying in May that it felt compelled to reconsider its options after a federal judge in April rejected a Pentagon move to have key parts of Amazon's lawsuit dismissed.

The JEDI saga has been unusual for the political dimension linked to Trump. In April 2020, the Defense Department inspector general's office concluded that the contracting process was in line with legal and government purchasing standards. The inspector general found no evidence of White House interference in the contract award process, but that review also said investigators could not fully review the matter because the White House would not allow unfettered access to witnesses.

Five months later, the Pentagon reaffirmed Microsoft as winner of the contract, but work remained stalled by Amazon's legal challenge.

In its April 2020 report, the inspector general's office did not draw a conclusion about whether the Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft Corp. was appropriately declared the winner. Rather, it looked at whether the decision-making process was proper and legal. It also examined allegations of unethical behavior by Pentagon officials involved in the matter and generally determined that any ethical lapses did not influence the outcome.

That review did not find evidence of White House pressure for the Pentagon to favor the Microsoft bid, but it also said it could not definitely determine the full extent of White House interactions with the Pentagon's decision makers.

Dutch crime reporter shot, badly wounded in Amsterdam street

AMSTERDAM (AP) — One of the Netherlands' best known crime reporters was shot Tuesday evening in a brazen attack in downtown Amsterdam and was fighting for his life in a hospital, the Dutch capital's mayor said.

Peter R. de Vries, who is widely lauded for fearless reporting on the Dutch underworld, was shot after making one of his regular appearances on a current affairs television show. It was an unusually brutal attack on a journalist in the Netherlands.

"Peter R. de Vries is for all of us a national hero, an unusually courageous journalist, tirelessly seeking justice," Mayor Femke Halsema said at a hastily convened news conference at the city's police headquarters.

"Today, justice in our country appears a long way off. A brutal, cowardly crime has been committed," Halsema added.

Police Chief Frank Paauw said two suspects were detained, "including a possible shooter" in a suspected getaway car stopped on a highway some 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of the city. A third suspect was detained in Amsterdam, he said.

There was no immediate word on a motive.

De Vries had long been considered a possible target of the criminals he doggedly reported on. Police and prosecutors declined Tuesday night to comment on whether the 64-year-old reporter received police protection.

Caretaker Prime Minister Mark Rutte called the shooting "shocking and incomprehensible"

"An attack on a courageous journalist and also an attack on the free journalism that is so essential for our democracy, our constitutional state, our society," Rutte said

De Vries had recently been acting as an adviser and confidant to a witness in a major trial of the alleged leader of a crime gang police described as an "oiled killing machine."

The suspected gangland leader, Ridouan Taghi, was extradited to the Netherlands from Dubai in 2019.

He is currently in jail while he stands trial along with 16 other suspects.

King Willem-Alexander and his wife Queen Maxima tweeted a message of support and said that "journalists must be free to carry out their important work without threats."

De Vries won an International Emmy in 2008 for a television show he made about the disappearance of U.S. teenager Natalee Holloway while she was on holiday in the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba in 2005.

Tenure struggle ends with Hannah-Jones charting new course

By TOM FOREMAN Jr. and AARON MORRISON Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) — A Black investigative journalist who won a Pulitzer Prize for her groundbreaking work on the bitter legacy of slavery in the U.S. announced Tuesday that she will not join the faculty at the University of North Carolina following an extended tenure fight marked by allegations of racism and conservative backlash about her work.

Nikole Hannah-Jones will instead accept a chaired professorship at Howard University, a historically Black school in Washington, D.C.

The dispute over whether North Carolina's flagship public university would grant Hannah-Jones a lifetime faculty appointment had prompted weeks of outcry from within and beyond its Chapel Hill campus. Numerous professors and alumni voiced frustration, and Black students and faculty questioned during protests whether the predominantly white university values them.

And while UNC belatedly offered her tenure last week, Hannah-Jones said in an interview with The Associated Press that the unfairness of how she was treated as a Black woman steered her toward turning the offer down.

"I wanted to send a powerful message, or what I hope to be a powerful message, that we're often treated like we should be lucky that these institutions let us in," said Hannah-Jones, who earned a master's degree from UNC. "But we don't have to go to those institutions if we don't want to."

Hannah-Jones — who won the Pulitzer Prize for her work on The New York Times Magazine's 1619 Project focusing on America's history of slavery — noted that she hadn't sought out the job, and was recruited by UNC's journalism dean before her tenure application stalled amid objections by a powerful donor and concerns by conservatives about her work.

"I wasn't seeking to go into academia," Hannah-Jones told AP. "It was this particular job at this particular place that I wanted to go and give back to the university that helped me build the career that I've built."

The 45-year-old Hannah-Jones will instead accept a tenured position as the Knight Chair in Race and Journalism at Howard, which also announced Tuesday that award-winning journalist and author Ta-Nehisi Coates is joining its faculty. Coates, who won a National Book Award for "Between the World and Me," and Hannah-Jones have both been given MacArthur "genius" grants for their writings.

Hannah-Jones' tenure application was submitted to UNC's trustees last year, but it was halted after a board member who vets the appointments raised questions about her nonacademic background. Instead, she was initially given a five-year contract, despite the fact that her predecessors were granted tenure when appointed. Last week the trustee board, after weeks of mounting pressure, finally voted to offer tenure.

UNC journalism school Dean Susan King, who supported Hannah-Jones throughout her application, said in a statement that she hopes "that UNC can learn from this long tenure drama about how we must change as a community of scholars in order to grow."

The university's enrollment is approximately 60% white and 8% Black.

More than 30 faculty members of the Hussman School of Journalism and Media signed a statement Tuesday saying they supported Hannah-Jones' decision and decrying "the appalling treatment of one of our nation's most-decorated journalists by her own alma mater."

"We will be frank: It was racist," the statement said.

Asked if she agreed with their assessment, Hannah-Jones told AP that "the facts speak for themselves."

"If there is a legitimate reason for why someone, who has worked in the field as long as I have, who has the credentials, the awards, or the status that I have, should be treated different than every other

white professor who came before me, outside of race, I would love to hear that explanation," she said. "I haven't heard it yet."

Hannah-Jones' and Coates' Howard appointments are supported by nearly \$20 million donated by three philanthropic foundations and an anonymous donor, gifts meant to bolster Howard's investment in Black journalists, the university said.

"At such a critical time for race relations in our country, it is vital that we understand the role of journalism in steering our national conversation and social progress," Howard President Wayne A. I. Frederick said in a news release.

Coates celebrated his return to Howard, which is his alma mater.

"This is the faculty that molded me. This is the faculty that strengthened me," Coates said. "Personally, I know of no higher personal honor than this."

In her written statement, Hannah-Jones cited political interference and the influence of a powerful donor to the journalism school, a reference to Arkansas newspaper publisher Walter Hussman. He has acknowledged in past interviews that he emailed university leaders challenging her work as "highly contentious and highly controversial."

Hussman, whose name adorns the UNC journalism school after he pledged a \$25 million donation, said in a phone interview Tuesday that he still has concerns about The 1619 Project but that he respects Hannah-Jones.

"I really felt a sense of regret that we were never able to get together and never had a chance to sit down and talk to her," he said.

What excites Hannah-Jones most about her Howard appointment, she said, is the opportunity to help mold a new generation of journalists to serve "as the truth tellers in our democracy."

"Unfortunately, for far too long, the institutions that are training Black journalists ... haven't been able to get the type of resources they needed, to really compete and gain entry into newsrooms at the rates that they should. And I believe that we can change that."

"While it's unfortunate how this came about, and I'm deeply saddened by what happened with my alma mater, this is not a consolation prize," she said of her new position at Howard.

"This hopefully also sends a message to other Black folks, who've gotten to a certain status in their career, that we can come home and build our own."

Blinken meets Uyghur ex-detainees; US warns of new sanctions

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Antony Blinken met virtually on Tuesday with Uyghur Muslims who were detained at camps in China's northwest Xinjiang region to hear about their experiences and seek advice on how best to pressure China to halt repression there.

The State Department said Blinken wanted to hear directly from the seven former detainees, relatives of others and advocates about conditions that they and the Uyghur community more broadly face.

"The secretary thought it important to meet with these individuals to hear firsthand their stories, to hear firsthand their impression of the ongoing atrocities in Xinjiang and the internment of a million Uyghurs," department spokesman Ned Price said. "Also, it's an opportunity for these participants to offer any recommendations they may have."

China has come under severe international criticism and sanctions for detaining more than 1 million Uyghurs and other minorities for political re-education in Xinjiang.

Price said the meeting showed continuity in American policy on the matter between the widely divergent Biden and Trump administrations.

Both administrations have termed the campaign in Xinjiang a "genocide" and slapped sanctions on China for human rights abuses. Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met several times with Uyghur ex-detainees during his tenure as America's top diplomat.

"America has spoken out very clearly and consistently about the abuses, about the atrocities, about the

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ongoing genocide that is taking place in Xinjiang," Price said. "And, as we deem appropriate, I suspect we'll be employing additional tools going forward to hold to account those officials responsible for what has taken place there."

Since the Trump administration, the U.S. has steadily ramped up pressure on China on a number of fronts, notably over repression in Xinjiang and a clampdown on political dissent and human rights in Hong Kong. Those have included travel bans, financial sanctions and commercial restrictions on Chinese imports to the U.S.

In Myanmar, the military and police declare war on medics

By KRISTEN GELINEAU and VICTORIA MILKO Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — The clandestine clinic was under fire, and the medics inside were in tears. Hidden away in a Myanmar monastery, this safe haven had sprung up for those injured while protesting the military's overthrow of the government. But now security forces had discovered its location.

A bullet struck a young man in the throat as he defended the door, and the medical staff tried frantically to stop the hemorrhaging. The floor was slick with blood.

In Myanmar, the military has declared war on health care — and on doctors themselves, who were early and fierce opponents of the takeover in February. Security forces are arresting, attacking and killing medical workers, dubbing them enemies of the state. With medics driven underground amid a global pandemic, the country's already fragile healthcare system is crumbling.

"The junta is purposely targeting the whole healthcare system as a weapon of war," says one Yangon doctor on the run for months, whose colleagues at an underground clinic were arrested during a raid. "We believe that treating patients, doing our humanitarian job, is a moral job....I didn't think that it would be accused as a crime."

Inside the clinic that day, the young man shot in the throat was fading. His sister wailed. A minute later, he was dead.

One of the clinic's medical students, whose name like those of several other medics has been withheld to protect her from retaliation, began to sweat and cry. She had never seen anyone shot.

Now she too was at risk. Two protesters smashed the glass out of a window so the medics could escape. "We are so sorry," the nurses told their patients.

One doctor stayed behind to finish suturing the patients' wounds. The others jumped through the window and hid in a nearby apartment complex for hours. Some were so terrified that they never returned home.

"I cry every day from that day," the medical student says. "I cannot sleep. I cannot eat well."

"That was a terrible day."

The suffering caused by the military's takeover of this nation of 54 million has been relentless. Security forces have killed at least 890 people, including a 6-year-old girl they shot in the stomach, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, which monitors arrests and deaths in Myanmar. Around 5,100 people are in detention and thousands have been forcibly disappeared. The military, known as the Tatmadaw, and police have returned mutilated corpses to families as tools of terror.

Amid all the atrocities, the military's attacks on medics, one of the most revered professions in Myanmar, have sparked particular outrage. Myanmar is now one of the most dangerous places on earth for health-care workers, with 240 attacks this year -- nearly half of the 508 globally tracked by the World Health Organization. That's by far the highest of any country.

"This is a group of folks who are standing up for what's right and standing up against decades of human rights abuses in Myanmar," says Raha Wala, advocacy director of the U.S.-based Physicians for Human Rights. "The Tatmadaw is hell-bent on using any means necessary to quash their fundamental rights and freedoms."

The military has issued arrest warrants for 400 doctors and 180 nurses, with photos of their faces plastered all over state media like "Wanted" posters. They are charged with supporting and taking part in the

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“civil disobedience” movement.

At least 157 healthcare workers have been arrested, 32 wounded and 12 killed since Feb. 1, according to Insecurity Insight, which analyzes conflicts around the globe. In recent weeks, arrest warrants have increasingly been issued for nurses.

Myanmar’s medics and their advocates argue that these assaults violate international law, which makes it illegal to attack health workers and patients or deny them care based on their political affiliations. In 2016, after similar attacks in Syria, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution demanding that medics be granted safe passage by all parties in a war.

“In other country’s protests, the medics are safe. They are exempt. Here, there are no exemptions,” says Dr. Nay Lin Tun, a general practitioner who has been on the run since February, and now provides care covertly.

Medics are targeted by the military because they are not only highly respected but also well-organized, with a strong network of unions and professional groups. In 2015, doctors pinned black ribbons to their uniforms to protest the appointment of military personnel to the Ministry of Health. Their Facebook page quickly gained thousands of followers, and the military appointments stopped.

This time, the protest by medics started days after the military ousted democratically elected leaders, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, from power. From remote towns in the northern mountains to the main city of Yangon, they walked off their jobs on military-owned facilities, pinning red ribbons to their clothes.

The response from the military was fierce, with security forces beating medical workers and stealing supplies. Security forces have occupied at least 51 hospitals since the takeover, according to Insecurity Insight, Physicians for Human Rights and the Johns Hopkins Center for Public Health and Human Rights.

On March 28, during a strike in the city of Monywa, a nurse was fatally shot in the head, according to AAPP. On May 8, hundreds of miles away in northern Kachin state, a doctor was arrested, tied up and also fatally shot in the head while passing a military base.

Rather than acknowledging its attacks on medical workers, the military is instead accusing them of genocide for not treating patients — despite itself being accused of genocide against the country’s Rohingya Muslim minority.

“They are killing people in cold blood. If this is not genocide, what shall I call it?” military spokesperson Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun said during an April 9 press conference broadcast live on national television.

A military spokesperson responded to written questions submitted by The Associated Press only by sending an article that blamed supposed election fraud for the country’s problems. Suu Kyi’s party won the November election in a landslide, and independent poll watchers have largely found it free of significant issues.

The crackdown on health care is hitting an already vulnerable system at a critical time. Even before the takeover, Myanmar had just 6.7 physicians per 10,000 people in 2018 — significantly lower than the global average of 15.6 in 2017, according to the World Bank.

Now, testing for COVID-19 has plummeted, and the vaccination program has stalled, with its former head, Dr. Htar Htar Lin, arrested and charged with high treason in June. Even if vaccines are available, people are afraid of being arrested just by going to the hospital, one medic told the AP.

Given the military’s crackdown on information, there are no independent figures on current COVID cases and deaths. The state media has reported almost 160,000 positive cases and 3,347 deaths. But experts say that is an undercount, and there are clear signs another COVID surge is happening in the country.

“What we’re seeing is really a human rights emergency that is turning into a public health disaster,” says Jennifer Leigh, an epidemiologist and Myanmar researcher for Physicians for Human Rights. “We’re definitely seeing echoes of what happened in Syria, where health workers and the health facility was systematically targeted.”

The crackdown has forced doctors to make excruciating choices and find new ways to reach patients.

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As an emergency physician at a government hospital, Dr. Zaw had been on the frontlines of the fight against COVID. In January, the first vaccines arrived from India, giving the exhausted doctor a rush of hope.

But after months of fighting a virus, she found herself instead fighting for democracy. Going on strike was an agonizing decision; as a doctor, she believed in caring for those in need. However, doing so meant working for and legitimizing the generals who overthrew her government.

The solution was providing care in secret, says Zaw, whom the AP is identifying by a partial name to protect her from retaliation.

In February, she helped set up a clinic tucked away in another monastery in another part of Myanmar, with supplies donated from a COVID facility where she had previously volunteered. A generator keeps the equipment running during the frequent power cuts. Select contacts in nearby townships who know the clinic's location direct the sick and wounded there.

Zaw fled the housing the government provides public doctors. She has since moved three times to avoid detection, and sent her family to a safehouse.

Now, she lives above the clinic, sleeping alongside seven other doctors and nurses on mats separated only by curtains. It has become too risky to leave the compound; she knows the soldiers are hunting for the clinic, and for her.

"Because of them, our hopes, our dreams, are hopeless," she says. "Some of the medical students and some of our doctors are dying because of them."

Sometimes, Zaw and her colleagues are tipped off by informants the night before a raid, giving them time to dismantle the clinic and hide the equipment. But on one recent day, they only had time to hide themselves. There was almost no warning, just the frantic shouts from the monks that the soldiers were already at the gate.

Zaw raced to a nearby building with her colleagues. Moments later, she watched through a window as soldiers stormed her clinic, frightening the patient she had just been treating for hypertension and diabetes. Normally shy and soft-spoken, she fought the urge to run out and hit them.

Volunteers told the soldiers that no government doctors were working there. The soldiers eventually left, and Zaw returned to her patient. She knows she was lucky that day, but she intends to keep treating the sick — even if her efforts end in her death.

"All people have to die one day," Zaw says. "So I'm prepared."

While some medics have gone underground, others have fled from the cities to the border areas.

Before the military takeover, it was difficult to persuade government doctors from the cities to work in states like Kachin, where ethnic armed groups have long battled the Tatmadaw, according to the founder of an underground clinic and medical training organization there. Since February, however, government doctors have come to Kachin to provide care and train others in emergency medicine, says the founder, who spoke anonymously to avoid retaliation. The group now has between 20 and 30 trainers.

Their clinic shifts locations constantly, sometimes operating out of a tent. The medics treat the injured from landmines, homemade bombs and battles with security forces.

The fear of being discovered is intense; the founder frets over a new car parked in front of his house and new faces in the neighborhood. His wife packed emergency bags filled with clothing, supplies and cash. Security forces recently abducted someone in front of one medic's home, he says, and were probably looking for the medic.

"Every day since I started doing this, I know my life is in danger," he says.

The war on medics is already taking a severe toll on those who need health care, especially the young.

Under a tarp in the jungle pounded by relentless rain, 20-year-old Naing Li stared helplessly at her firstborn child, just five days old. The newborn's breathing had grown labored, and his tiny body felt like it was on fire.

She could do nothing. Her husband was back in their village in western Myanmar, near the embattled town of Mindat, fighting advancing soldiers. And there were no medics around to help — not here in the

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jungle where she had fled with her baby, and not in their village either.

The baby is among about 600,000 newborns who aren't receiving essential care, putting them at risk of illness, disability and death, according to UNICEF, the U.N. children's agency. A million children are missing out on routine immunizations. Nearly 5 million are not receiving Vitamin A supplements to prevent infection and blindness, and more than 40,000 are no longer getting treated for malnutrition.

At the same time, COVID is spreading rapidly along Myanmar's porous border with Bangladesh, India and Thailand, alarming health experts.

"This has the potential to turn into a very big and very bad public health crisis," says Alessandra Dentice, UNICEF's Myanmar representative.

Naing Li and her baby had already survived one crisis — a difficult labor at home. They hadn't been able to go to a hospital in nearby Mindat, where the military launched a bloody assault and declared martial law. The fighting closed the few private clinics that had remained open.

Little Mg Htan Naing was healthy when he entered into this chaotic world on May 16, looking like his mother. But five days later, in the jungle, the swaddled infant struggled to breathe.

By the next morning, Naing Li was desperate enough to risk returning home for help. When she arrived, however, she found her husband, 23-year-old Naing Htan, struck in the back by shrapnel.

The couple could only watch as their son slipped away. At 11 a.m., Mg Htan Naing died in his mother's arms.

Men in Myanmar are not supposed to cry in front of others, but the father could not contain his grief.

"I cried out loud in agony even though I am a man," he says.

Even if the couple had found a doctor in time, they likely would have faced the challenge of finding medicine. Healthcare workers interviewed by the AP said soldiers are blocking aid and have taken medical equipment and drugs from clinics during raids.

A Mindat resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid retaliation, said she and her family stored medicine in preparation before the fighting broke out. But with water supplies cut and no way to properly clean themselves, they worry about diseases.

"It is very difficult here," she says. "If we get sick, we cannot go to the clinic. We have to take whatever medicine we have at home."

The collapse of the public hospital system has also put pressure on aid groups.

In Shan and Kachin states, Médecins Sans Frontières has taken on more than 3,045 patients who would otherwise have been treated under the government's AIDS program. The clinics have been forced to cut the life-saving HIV/AIDS medicine they distribute to patients from three-month supplies to one.

Many aid groups have shut down or drastically scaled back operations. After the military takeover, aid groups stopped coming to a camp for 1,000 displaced people in Kachin state, a women's advocate says. A weekly free government clinic closed.

Now, the children and elderly there are suffering from diarrhea and malnourishment. There is no one to perform surgeries or deliver babies. Food is scarce, and most people are relying on traditional medicines.

"We are barely scraping by," she says. "I feel death is just around the corner for us."

For countless others, like Mg Htan Naing, death has already come. The baby's parents buried him in their garden, then fled. His father blames his son's death not on the doctors on strike, but on the soldiers who drove them from Mindat.

This is what haunts the country's caretakers of the sick and wounded: The people they could have saved, if only they had not been under attack.

"Given the chance, we could have stopped bleeding, we could have saved the patients, we could have prevented deaths. It hurts," says the Yangon doctor. "The people dying are not just nobodies. They are our country's future generations."

EXPLAINER: Who runs the Vatican while pope is hospitalized?

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

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ROME (AP) — The Vatican has detailed laws, rituals and roles to ensure the transfer of power when a pope dies or resigns. But none of them apply when he is sick or even unconscious, and there are no specific norms governing what happens when a pope becomes incapacitated.

As a result, even though Pope Francis remains hospitalized while he recovers from intestinal surgery Sunday at a Rome hospital, he is still pope and very much in charge. The Vatican said Tuesday Francis had eaten breakfast, read the newspapers and had a walk, and that his post-operative recovery was proceeding normally.

Still, his weeklong hospital stay — the first of his papacy — has sparked interest about how papal power is exercised in the Holy See, how it is transferred and under what circumstances.

Here's how it works:

THE ROLE OF THE POPE

The pope is the successor of the Apostle Peter, the head of the college of bishops, the Vicar of Christ, and the pastor of the universal Catholic Church on Earth, according to the church's in-house canon law.

Nothing has changed in his status, role or power since he was elected the 266th pope on March 13, 2013, even while he underwent three hours of surgery Sunday to remove half of his colon.

That status is by theological design.

"The pope's authority is supreme, full and universal," said canon lawyer Nicholas Cafardi. "So if his authority is at that level, who gets to decide that he can no longer exercise that authority? There's nobody above him."

THE VATICAN CURIA

Francis may be in charge, but he already delegates the day-to-day running of the Vatican and church to a team of officials who operate whether he is in the Apostolic Palace or not, and whether he is conscious or not.

Chief among them is the secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin. In a sign that Francis' hospitalization foresaw no change to the governance of the church, Parolin wasn't even in the Vatican during Francis' three-hour scheduled surgery. He was in Strasbourg, France, to commemorate the 1,300th anniversary of the death of the patron saint of Alsace.

Other Vatican functions are proceeding normally. Its daily noon bulletin came out again Tuesday with the names of new bishops appointed by the pope in Nicaragua, Nigeria and Britain. They presumably were approved ahead of time, although Francis could sign decrees and handle other matters of importance from his hospital bed, as St. John Paul II was known to have done during his many hospitalizations.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A POPE GETS SICK?

Canon law does have provisions for when a diocesan bishop gets sick and can't run his diocese, but none for a pope. Canon 412 says a diocese can be declared "impeded" if its bishop — due to "captivity, banishment, exile, or incapacity" — cannot fulfill his pastoral functions. In such cases, the day-to-day running of the diocese shifts to an auxiliary bishop, a vicar general or someone else.

Even though Francis is the bishop of Rome, no explicit provision exists for the pope if he similarly becomes "impeded." Canon 335 declares simply that when the Holy See is "vacant or entirely impeded," nothing can be altered in the governance of the church. But it doesn't say what it means for the Holy See to be "entirely impeded" or what provisions might come into play if it ever were.

"Really, we have no rules for this," Cafardi said. "There are no canons and there's no separate document that says how you would determine incapacity, whether incapacity could be permanent or temporary, and even more importantly who would govern the church in that time. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. We just leave it up to the Holy Spirit."

WHAT ABOUT POPE PAUL VI'S LETTER?

In 1965, Pope Paul VI wrote letters to the dean of the College of Cardinals hypothesizing that if he were to become seriously ill, the dean and other cardinals should accept his resignation.

Paul foresaw the possibility that as popes continued to live longer, they could become incapacitated by stroke, dementia or some other long-term, progressive ailment that would make it impossible for them to do their job, and unable to freely resign.

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In one letter, published in 2018, he cited an infirmity “which is presumed incurable or of long duration and which prevents us from sufficiently exercising the functions of our apostolic ministry.”

The letter was never invoked, since Paul lived another 13 years and died on the job.

But experts say Paul’s letter was unlikely to have ever been used since canon law requires a papal resignation be “freely and properly manifested” — as was the case when Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation in 2013.

The scenario Paul envisioned — laying out grounds for his resignation in advance for a time when he might not be conscious or capable — “is not valid, because for a pope to validly resign from office he has to be lucid,” said Kurt Martens, canon lawyer and professor at Catholic University of America.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A POPE DIES OR RESIGNS?

The only time papal power changes hands is when a pope dies or resigns. At that time a whole series of rites and rituals comes into play governing the “interregnum” — the period between the end of one pontificate and the election of a new pope.

During that period, known as the “sede vacante,” or “empty See,” the camerlengo, or chamberlain, runs the administration and finances of the Holy See. He certifies the pope’s death, seals the papal apartments and prepares for the pope’s burial before a conclave to elect a new pope. The position is currently held by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the head of the Vatican’s laity office.

The camerlengo has no role or duties if the pope is merely sick or otherwise incapacitated.

“You have two options: Either you have a pope or you don’t have one, and as long as you have a pope — and in the case here he’s not dead — he governs the church,” Martens said. “Even if he’s dying, he governs the church.”

WHAT ABOUT POPE BENEDICT XVI?

Even though there is a retired pope living on the Vatican grounds, he has no formal role to play, either. Benedict, 94, ceased being pope on Feb. 28, 2013, when he became the the first pontiff in 600 years to resign. He has been living in a converted monastery in the Vatican gardens ever since.

Citing his private secretary, RAI state television said Benedict was praying for Francis’ recovery.

Bruce Springsteen’s daughter makes Olympic equestrian team

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) — The daughter of rock icon Bruce Springsteen and singer-songwriter Patti Scialfa has been selected as one of four riders on the U.S. jumping team that will compete at the Tokyo Olympics.

U.S. Equestrian announced Monday that Jessica Springsteen would be making her Olympic debut. The 29-year-old has said being selected would fulfill a lifelong dream.

Springsteen will team with Kent Farrington, Laura Kraut and McLain Ward when the equestrian competition begins Aug. 3. The team will be led by chef d’equipe Robert Ridland and Lizzy Chesson.

“I feel very confident that the seasoned group of riders that we will be sending to Tokyo is in top current form and peaking at just the right time,” Ridland said in a statement.

Farrington is 40, Ward 45 and Kraut 55, and the trio has competed at a combined seven Olympics.

Springsteen, ranked third behind Kraut and Ward, will be riding 12-year-old stallion Don Juan van de Donkhoeve.

Unending grief of COVID-19 deaths causing problems for some

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

Kelly Brown’s 74-year-old father got sick first with COVID-19, followed by her 71-year-old mom just two days later. John and Judy Trzebiatowski died of the illness just a week apart last August, sending Brown into a black tunnel of grief that doesn’t seem to have an end.

Health restrictions stripped away the things that normally help people deal with death, such as bedside visits at the Wisconsin hospital where they were treated and a big funeral with hugs and tears, she said. That left Brown to deal with her sorrow on her own, and now she’s having a hard time seeing a way forward.

With more than 605,000 dead of COVID-19 in the United States and nearly 4 million worldwide, Brown

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is among the thousands or more who could be experiencing prolonged grief, the kind of mourning that experts say can prevent people from moving beyond a death and functioning normally again.

"It's the most horrible thing to have to go through," said Brown. "I would not wish this upon anyone."

Natalia Skritskaya, an expert on grieving, said it's too early to say whether prolonged grieving, also known as complicated grief, will be a major complication from the pandemic — it isn't yet over, with thousands still dying daily worldwide, including hundreds in the United States. Many mourners have yet to pass the one-year anniversary of a loss, and few studies have been published so far on the psychiatric fallout, she said.

But prolonged grief is both real and potentially debilitating, said Skritskaya, a research scientist and clinical psychologist with the Center for Complicated Grief at Columbia University in New York. She noted that it can be treated with therapy in which participants talk through their experience and feelings.

"The core of it is kind of helping people face the reality of what happened," she said. "It's not an easy treatment. It's intense."

Jerri Vance said therapy has helped her deal with grief since her husband, James Vance, a retired police officer in Bluefield, West Virginia, died of COVID-19 on New Year's Day, but she worries about their two young daughters.

"Seeing my kids' grief adds to my pain," she said. "One of my kids isn't making much progress in therapy because her daddy was her person. She is still mad at the world."

A study published in the fall predicted a likely increase in cases of prolonged grief linked to the pandemic. Already, people who lost loved ones to COVID-19 are filling social media pages with stories of tears and sadness that just won't go away.

Many cite the loss of typical end-of-life rituals for their continual grieving; some struggle because of the unexpectedness and seeming unfairness of the coronavirus. The politicization of the pandemic is a thorn for many who constantly see and hear some argue against what health experts say are life-saving practices including vaccinations, mask wearing and social distancing.

"In my office I listen all day to unsolicited opinions and try not to engage, as it is unprofessional," said Betsy Utnick, whose father, Sheldon Polan of Selden, New York, died in April 2020. She said she still cries every day because the grief has yet to subside.

Noreen Wasti knows the feeling. She lost her father to the illness caused by the coronavirus on Dec. 27 and is having a hard time going on.

Wasti, who writes and creates online content in New York, said she's unsure what it will take to get over the loss of Salman Wasti, 76, a retired biology professor from Glocester, Rhode Island.

"This has been the first time I've lost someone so dear to me, so I never had a map for grief nor really understood the magnitude. I always thought you're sad for a few months and then you're OK. I was so wrong," she said. "It hits in waves and those waves feel as severe as the day we lost him."

With so many people hurting and little personal interaction for months because of pandemic health restrictions, social media has become the place where many connect to share stories of loved ones and loss. One private Facebook page dealing with COVID-19 losses has more than 10,000 members, and continuing grief is a constant thread of discussion.

Rabia Khan has found solace online since the death on Thanksgiving Day of her father, Pakistani activist Muhammad Hameedullah Khan of Chicago. In survivor and family groups, she said, the grieving don't face insensitive questions about how a loved one contracted the virus or why someone wasn't careful enough to avoid it.

Aside from sharing stories online of her late boyfriend Ben Schaeffer, a New York subway conductor and historian, Lisa Smid has tried to redirect her anguish into something positive. She sponsored an online lecture at the New York Transit Museum and plans to honor his legacy by endowing more memorial lectures.

"I like being able to have an event to look forward to at which I'll have an acceptable outlet for my grief as I move forward with my own life," she said.

Ann Haas of St. Paul, Minnesota, is still trying to find some sort of outlet as she mourns, but work keeps bringing her back to the worst day of her life.

Haas lost her father, Raymond Haas, to COVID-19 on Nov. 11 and works in the laundry at the same

Veterans Affairs hospital where he spent his final days. Haas said memories keep flooding back each time she folds a tan blanket like the one that covered him while he was fighting to live.

"I wish other people could see what this does to people. I hear people saying, 'This isn't real, it's nothing,'" Haas said between sobs. "I've got nothing left. I don't know if it's going to take them losing someone to understand."

In hunt for infrastructure deal, every Dem has leverage

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a crucial moment for Democrats, party leaders are hunting for a sweet spot that would satisfy their rival moderate and progressive wings on legislation to finance President Joe Biden's multitrillion-dollar agenda of bolstering the economy and helping families.

With virtually no votes to spare and saber rattling by both Democratic factions, leaders are finding their search for middle ground arduous — even though the president's push for infrastructure projects and family-centered initiatives is his top domestic priority.

With Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., winning the spotlight this year for pulling his party rightward by issuing demands on crucial issues, plenty of centrists and liberals are now using that same playbook. In a procession of meetings with White House officials and congressional budget writers, progressives have insisted that the emerging measures be big and aggressive, while moderates want them to be far more modest.

"We're all Joe Manchin right now," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Yarmuth of Kentucky.

The leverage every Democrat has flows from simple arithmetic. Expecting unanimous Republican opposition to much of Biden's package, they need total unity in the 50-50 Senate — plus Vice President Kamala Harris' tie-breaking vote — and can lose only a very few House votes.

With trillions in spending at their disposal, Democratic leaders have plenty of options for designing programs that appeal to lawmakers' hometown interests to win votes. More broadly, however, the intraparty fight pits two ideologies against each other — progressives' eagerness to help needy families, moderates seeking to do so but with fiscal constraints — and their differences are real.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., recently floated an enormous \$6 trillion proposal for infrastructure, climate change, health care and other programs that many progressives love. It goes well beyond Biden's vision of spending roughly \$4 trillion on similar projects. Manchin has said he wants to pare it back further, a view many moderate Democrats endorse but that progressives say would eviscerate the president's agenda.

Sanders is now immersed in talks with his panel's Democrats on finding a compromise on spending and offsetting revenues.

The party is hoping he can craft a budget resolution — the first step in Congress' creaky process for churning out spending and tax bills — that Democrats can push through the Senate and House this month. Lawmakers would likely work on detailed bills actually providing the funds and revenue this fall.

Lawmakers, aides and lobbyists say Sanders is running into resistance from moderates and will be lucky to come close to even Biden's \$4 trillion. And while moderates and progressives have generally refrained from sniping and publicly drawing lines in the sand, they're not bashful about voicing their views.

Among centrists, Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., has said he'll oppose his party's budget and subsequent progressive-backed legislation financing programs aimed at families, telling the Capitol Hill publication Roll Call that's he's concerned about excessive spending. Rep. Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J., a leader of the House's bipartisan Problem Solvers group, calls Sanders' \$6 trillion "very aggressive." And Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., a leader of the moderate New Democrat Coalition, said he wants to help families and businesses without "building castles in the sky."

Progressives are just as assertive. To maintain leverage, they're demanding that Congress not approve a bipartisan Senate compromise providing \$1.2 trillion for roads, pipelines and other infrastructure projects until there's also a second bill providing additional money for health care, housing and other programs, which is unlikely to win GOP votes.

That strategy has won support from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., with Biden also favoring the

two-track approach. But moderates anxious to notch an infrastructure win and less wedded to a huge, separate bill expanding family-centered programs are pushing back, saying they want Congress to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill as soon as this month.

Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla., co-chair of House Democrats' centrist Blue Dog Coalition, says she thinks there will be enough votes to quickly approve the infrastructure measure. "And when you have the votes you should take the vote," she said.

Countering that, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, says "dozens" of her group's nearly 100 members say they won't vote for the bipartisan infrastructure bill unless the separate package of health care and other family-oriented programs also moves.

"Our leverage is saying we're not going to be able to pass a piece of legislation unless you do the other one" for families, said Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., the progressive group's vote counter.

The progressive caucus has said it wants five priorities included in the legislation: health care, housing, child care and other family benefits, climate change and helping millions of immigrants become citizens.

Moderates have voiced general support for health care, family benefits and other progressive priorities. But some have suggested, often without detail, downsizing liberals' costly proposals like expanding Medicare coverage to people as young as age 60. They cite concerns about higher prices that some say federal spending could ignite.

"There's this 'I' word out there that's called inflation," said Rep. Lou Correa, D-Calif., a member of House Democrats' Blue Dogs.

Besides setting spending and revenue targets, a budget will be make-or-break for Democrats because under congressional rules, it would let them prevent Republicans from using Senate filibusters to kill later legislation actually providing the money for Biden's plans. Filibusters, or endless procedural delays, take 60 votes to overcome, a nearly insurmountable obstacle in today's hyper-partisan Congress.

Democrats control the House 220-211 with four vacancies and can lose no more than four of their votes to pass bills. That number will shrink to just three after a Texas runoff late this month in which both remaining candidates are Republicans.

"Everybody needs to advocate as clear as possible for their priorities," said Yarmuth, the House budget chairman. "But everybody ultimately has to vote for whatever comes up, or we get nothing."

28 feared dead in plane crash in Russia's Far East

By DARIA LITVINOVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A plane carrying 28 people crashed Tuesday, apparently as it came in for a landing in bad weather in Russia's Far East, and everyone aboard was feared dead.

Wreckage from the An-26 was found on a coastal cliffside and in the sea near the airport in the town of Palana, according to officials. The plane was on approach for a landing in fog and clouds when it missed a scheduled communication and disappeared from radar, officials from the Kamchatka region said.

The plane "practically crashed into a sea cliff," which wasn't supposed to be in its landing trajectory, according to Sergei Gorb, deputy director of the company that owns the aircraft, Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise.

The plane was in operation since 1982, Russian state news agency Tass reported. Alexei Khabarov, director of Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise, told the Interfax news agency that the aircraft was technically sound before taking off from the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky.

According to Russian media reports, none of the six crew members or 22 passengers on board survived. The head of the local government in Palana, Olga Mokhireva, was among the passengers, spokespeople of the Kamchatka government said.

However, no bodies were found yet, and there was no official confirmation of the reports.

Russia's state aviation agency, Rosaviatsiya, said that parts of the plane were found about 3 miles (5 kilometers) from the airport's runway. Part of the fuselage was found on the side of a mountain, Russia's Pacific Fleet told news agencies, and another part was floating in the Okhotsk Sea.

A criminal investigation was opened, as is typical.

A search-and-rescue mission was underway in the mountainous area, but the work was suspended after night fell, the governor of Kamchatka, Vladimir Solodov, said.

"The site itself is difficult to access, a helicopter can't land there," Solodov said in video posted on the regional government's website. "Because of adverse weather conditions, high waves, the rescue operation had to be temporarily suspended. It will resume tomorrow morning."

Authorities plan to deploy professional divers and rescuers trained for working in mountainous terrain.

Solodov added that a group of government officials including Transport Minister Vitaly Savelyev will head to Palana on Wednesday.

In 2012, an An-28 plane belonging to Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise crashed into a mountain while flying the same route as Tuesday's flight. A total of 14 people were on board and 10 of them were killed. Both pilots, who were among the dead, were found to have alcohol in their blood, Tass reported.

As employers struggle to fill jobs, teens come to the rescue

By PAUL WISEMAN and JOSEPH PISANI AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The owners of restaurants, amusement parks and retail shops, many of them desperate for workers, are sounding an unusual note of gratitude this summer:

Thank goodness for teenagers.

As the U.S. economy bounds back with unexpected speed from the pandemic recession and customer demand intensifies, high school-age kids are filling jobs that older workers can't — or won't.

The result is that teens who are willing to bus restaurant tables or serve as water-park lifeguards are commanding \$15, \$17 or more an hour, plus bonuses in some instances or money to help pay for school classes. The trend marks a shift from the period after the 2007-2009 Great Recession, when older workers often took such jobs and teens were sometimes squeezed out.

The time, an acute labor shortage, especially at restaurants, tourism and entertainment businesses, has made teenage workers highly popular again.

"We're very thankful they are here," says Akash Kapoor, CEO of Curry Up Now. Fifty teenagers are working this summer at his five San Francisco-area Indian street food restaurants, up from only about a dozen last year. "We may not be open if they weren't here. We need bodies."

The proportion of Americans ages 16-19 who are working is higher than it's been in years: In May, 33.2% of them had jobs, the highest such percentage since 2008. Though the figure dipped to 31.9% in June, the Labor Department reported Friday, that is still higher than it was before the pandemic devastated the economy last spring.

At the Cattivella Italian restaurant in Denver, for instance, Harry Hittle, 16, is earning up to \$22.50 an hour, including tips, from his job clearing restaurant tables. He's used the windfall to buy gas and insurance for his car and has splurged on a road bike and an electric guitar.

"There's never been a better time to apply for a job if you're a teen," says Mathieu Stevenson, CEO of Snagajob, an online job site for hourly work.

Consider the findings of Neeta Fogg, Paul Harrington and Ishwar Khatiwada, researchers at Drexel University's Center for Labor Markets and Policy who issue an annual forecast for the teenage summer job market. This year, they predict, will be the best summer for teenage lifeguards, ice cream scoopers and sales clerks since 2008; 31.5% of 16- to 19-year-olds will have jobs.

Teenage employment had been on a long slide, leading many analysts to lament the end of summer-time jobs that gave teens work experience and a chance to mingle with colleagues and customers from varying backgrounds.

In August 1978, 50% of teenagers were working, according to the U.S. Labor Department. Their employment rate hasn't been that high since. The figure began a long slide in 2000 and fell especially steeply during the Great Recession. The eruption of coronavirus produced a new low: Only 26.3% of teens had jobs last summer, according to the Drexel researchers.

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The long-term drop in teen employment has reflected both broad economic shifts and personal choices. The U.S. economy includes fewer low-skill, entry-level jobs — ready-made for teens — than it did in the 1970s and 1980s. And such jobs that do remain have been increasingly likely to be taken by older workers, many of them foreign born.

In addition, teens from affluent families, eager to secure admission to top universities, have for years chosen summer academic programs over jobs or have pursued ambitious volunteer work in hopes of distinguishing their applications for college. Others have spent their summers playing competitive sports.

This summer, things are rather different. After collapsing last spring, the economy has rebounded much faster than expected. Restaurants, bars, retail shops and amusement parks have been overwhelmed by pent-up demand from consumers who had mostly hunkered down for a year or more.

Now, those businesses need employees to handle the influx and are scrambling to find enough. The vaccine rollout was just starting in April and May, when employers typically start hiring for summer. Some of these businesses delayed their hiring decisions, unsure whether or when the economy would fully reopen.

Foreign workers, brought in on J-1 work-and-study visas, typically filled many such summer jobs. But President Donald Trump suspended those visas as a coronavirus precaution, and the number of U.S.-issued J-1 visas tumbled 69% in the fiscal 2020 year — to 108,510, from 353,279 the year before.

In past years, for example, foreigners visiting the U.S. on visas took filled 180 summer jobs at Big Kahuna's water park in Destin, Florida. Last year, there were just three. This year, eight. Desperate to attract local teens, Big Kahuna's, which is owned by Boomers Parks, is now paying \$12 an hour, up from less than \$10 an hour in past years.

Compounding the labor squeeze, many older Americans have been slow to respond to a record number of job openings. Some have lingering health concerns or trouble arranging or affording child care at a time when schools are transitioning from remote to in-person learning. Other adults may have been discouraged from seeking work because of generous federal unemployment benefits, though many states have dropped these benefits, and they will end nationwide on Sept. 6.

So businesses are offering signing bonuses and whatever else they can to hire teens in a hurry.

Wendy's, which relies on teens to salt fries and ring up orders, added a way for applicants to apply for a job through their smartphones. Applicants are screened using artificial intelligence, which gets them to an interview faster than if they uploaded a resume. The idea is to hire them before another employer can.

"Speed is critical," said Randy Pianin, CEO of JAE Restaurant Group, a franchisee that owns 220 Wendy's locations. As a perk, JAE is offering workers a way to get hold of some of their pay the day after they earn it, Pianin said, instead of having to wait two weeks for a paycheck.

Boomers Parks has raised pay at the eight amusement parks it owns and is offering bonuses of up to \$50 a week for some teen workers who stay through the summer, CEO Tim Murphy said. With fewer people seemingly willing to take the jobs, Murphy said, competition for workers is fierce.

At its Sahara Sam's water park in West Berlin, New Jersey, the company lowered its minimum working age to 15 from 16 to try to recruit a larger pool of candidates.

Johnathon Miller thought he would need to wait until August, when he turned 16, to start working. But when he heard about a lowered age limit at Sahara Sam's, he applied — and got the job. He will soon be a lifeguard, watching over the lazy river for \$15 an hour, a couple of bucks more an hour than Sahara Sam's used to pay.

"I'm looking forward to working," said Miller, who lives in Woolwich Township, New Jersey — so much so that he got a friend interested, too: "He was like, 'Whoa, they are hiring at (age) 15?'"

At Curry Up Now, the restaurant pays \$2 an hour above the minimum wage, which is \$15 or more an hour, depending on the Bay Area location. The chain is also offering a fund for teens to pay for classes or books, as well as free Zoom classes on how to manage money.

Kapoor concedes that young hires require restaurant training and might not stick around for long. But there are advantages to having teens on staff. They are typically inclined to persuade their friends to work or eat there, giving Curry Up Now a stream of future workers and customers. And they have updated the restaurant's music, adding more songs from the '80s and '90s as well as tunes from India and the Middle

East.

All that said, the revival of teen employment might not last. The pre-pandemic trend toward fewer young workers at restaurants and entertainment venues could reassert itself if the economy's labor shortages are eventually resolved.

Still, Harrington, director of Drexel's labor markets center, notes that "employers have moved down the labor queue as the labor supply of adults has become more constrained."

If the economic recovery continues to reduce unemployment, and if federal policymakers continue to restrict the influx of low-skilled foreign workers, "then the chances for sustained growth in teen employment rates are good," Harrington said.

With McCain in mind, Sinema reaches for bipartisanship

By LISA MASCARO and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than for her shock of purple hair or unpredictable votes, Democratic Sen. Kyrsten Sinema is perhaps best known for doing the unthinkable in Washington: She spends time on the Republican side of the aisle.

Not only does she pass her days chatting up the Republican senators, she has been known to duck into their private GOP cloakroom — absolutely unheard of — and banter with the GOP leadership. She and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell talk often by phone.

Sinema's years in Congress have been a whirlwind of political style and perplexing substance, an antiwar liberal-turned-deal-making centrist who now finds herself at the highest levels of power. A key negotiator of the bipartisan infrastructure compromise, she was among those President Joe Biden first called to make the deal — and then called upon again as he worked furiously to salvage the agreement from collapse. A holdout to changing the Senate's filibuster rules, she faces enormous pressure to act as voting rights in her own state and others hang in the balance.

"If anybody can pull this off it's Kyrsten," said David Lujan, a former Democratic colleague of Sinema's in the Arizona statehouse. "She's incredibly smart, so she can figure out where people's commonalities are and get things done."

The senator's theory of the case of how to govern in Washington will be tested in the weeks ahead as Congress works to turn the infrastructure compromise into law and mounts a response to the Supreme Court decision upholding Arizona's strict new voting rules.

She is modeling her approach on the renegade style of Arizona Sen. John McCain, who died in 2018 and was known for his willingness to reach across the aisle. But aspiring to bold bipartisanship is challenging in the post-Trump era of hardened political bunkers and fierce cultural tribalism. Many in her own party scoff at her overtures to the GOP and criticize her for not playing hardball.

Her name is now uttered alongside West Virginia's Sen. Joe Manchin as the two Democrats standing in the way of changing the filibuster rules requiring 60 votes to advance legislation — a priority for liberals working to pass Biden's agenda in the split 50-50 Senate. This year she cast a procedural vote against raising the minimum wage and has opposed the climate change-focused Green New Deal, even though she's not fully opposed to either policy. She declined a request for an interview.

"It's the easiest thing in the world for politicians to declare bipartisanship dead and line up on respective sides of a partisan battle," she said in a statement to The Associated Press. "What's harder is getting out of our comfort zones, finding common ground with unlikely allies, and forming coalitions that can achieve durable, lasting results."

Sinema arrived in Washington with a burst of energy and a swoosh of fashion. She quickly became known as one of the best vote counters in the House, on par with Speaker Nancy Pelosi, because of her visits to the other side of the aisle. She voted against Pelosi more than once for speaker.

Her maiden speech in the Senate drew from McCain's farewell address, a marker of where she was headed. She changed the decades-old Senate dress code by simply wearing whatever she wants — and daring anyone to stop her. The purple wig was a nod to the coronavirus pandemic's lockdown. (In off

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hours, she has been spotted wearing a ring with an expletive similar to “buzz off.”)

“People may debate her sincerity, but the truth is, she makes an active decision that she’s going to work well with other people — and I haven’t seen her slip up,” said Republican Rep. Patrick McHenry of North Carolina, who served with her in the House.

Sinema’s status as a bipartisan leader fascinates those who’ve watched her decades-long rise in Arizona politics, where she began as a lonely left-wing activist who worked for Ralph Nader’s 2000 Green Party presidential campaign and then slowly retooled herself into a moderate advocate of working across the aisle.

“Ideologically, it does surprise me,” Steven Yarbrough, a Republican who served 12 years with Sinema in the Arizona legislature, said of her transformation. “But given how smart and driven she is, well, that doesn’t surprise me at all.”

That Sinema even made it that far seemed improbable. Her parents divorced when she was young, and she moved with her mother and stepfather from Tucson to the Florida panhandle, where she lived in an abandoned gas station for three years.

Driven to succeed, she graduated from the local high school as valedictorian at age 16 and earned her bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University in Utah at age 18, leaving the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in which she’d been raised, after graduation.

Sinema landed in Phoenix, where she earned several more degrees — including a law degree and a doctorate — worked as a social worker and then a lawyer, vociferously protested the Iraq War and fought for immigrant and LGBTQ rights at a time when Arizona was veering right. In 2004 she was elected to the state legislature representing a fairly liberal area and initially was a backbencher who lobbed rhetorical bombs from the left.

But Sinema has written and spoken extensively of how she discovered the merits of moderation while serving in the GOP-controlled state legislature. She wrote a book titled “Unite and Conquer” about the need for leftists to compromise and cut deals.

In 2006, she co-chaired a bipartisan group to fight a gay marriage ban on the ballot and had to decide whether to simply condemn the ban or try to defeat it, said Steve May, the Republican former state lawmaker who collaborated with her.

An avid consumer of polling, she helped hit upon a strategy of targeting older, retired heterosexual couples who could also lose benefits under the ballot measure due to their unmarried status. They narrowly succeeded in defeating it. (Another ban passed two years later.)

“She came from doing speeches and leading protests, and she learned she can actually win,” May said.

When a congressional seat opened up in a bluing stretch of Phoenix’s eastern suburbs, Sinema ran and won.

She had remade herself into the ideal candidate for a state that was slowly becoming competitive. And in 2018, she seized the moment, winning the open Senate seat.

Her infrastructure work is only one of several bipartisan “gangs” in the Senate where she is testing her theory of governance. She is about to roll out a minimum wage proposal with Republican Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah and is involved with others on immigration law changes.

“Kyrsten is always honest and straightforward, two often underrated qualities that are the mark of a successful legislator,” said Sen. John Thune, the South Dakota Republican whip, who is among those Sinema often seeks out for conversation.

In a statement to the AP, Thune said that “while we certainly don’t see eye-to-eye on every issue,” he trusts that she is transparent with him, and he respects her “sincere pursuit of bipartisanship.”

Charming and funny in private conversations, Sinema prides herself on competing in marathons and triathlons, while maintaining a notoriously colorful wardrobe — even in her Green Party days, she referred to herself as a “Prada socialist.”

Dashing from the Senate recently, she brushed off reporters’ questions about the infrastructure talks. On that day she wore a faux tuxedo bib dress paired with a suit jacket. Why?

She does what she wants, she suggested, by way of a shrug, before she climbed into a waiting car.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, July 7, the 188th day of 2021. There are 177 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 7, 1981, President Ronald Reagan announced he was nominating Arizona Judge Sandra Day O'Connor to become the first female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

On this date:

In 1846, U.S. annexation of California was proclaimed at Monterey (mahn-tuh-RAY') after the surrender of a Mexican garrison.

In 1865, four people were hanged in Washington, D.C. for conspiring with John Wilkes Booth to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln: Lewis Powell (aka Lewis Payne), David Herold, George Atzerodt and Mary Surratt, the first woman to be executed by the federal government.

In 1898, the United States annexed Hawaii.

In 1919, the first Transcontinental Motor Convoy, in which a U.S. Army convoy of motorized vehicles crossed the United States, departed Washington, D.C. (The trip ended in San Francisco on Sept. 6, 1919.)

In 1946, Jimmy Carter, 21, married Rosalynn (ROH'-zuh-lihn) Smith, 18, in Plains, Georgia.

In 1948, six female U.S. Navy reservists became the first women to be sworn in to the regular Navy.

In 1954, Elvis Presley made his radio debut as Memphis, Tennessee, station WHBQ played his first recording for Sun Records, "That's All Right."

In 1976, the United States Military Academy at West Point included female cadets for the first time as 119 women joined the Class of 1980.

In 1983, 11-year-old Samantha Smith of Manchester, Maine, left for a visit to the Soviet Union at the personal invitation of Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov (ahn-DROH'-pawf).

In 2005, terrorist bombings in three Underground stations and a double-decker bus killed 52 victims and four bombers in the worst attack on London since World War II.

In 2009, some 20,000 people gathered inside Staples Center in Los Angeles for a memorial service honoring the late Michael Jackson, who was tearfully described by his 11-year-old daughter, Paris-Michael, as "the best father you could ever imagine."

In 2010, Los Angeles police charged Lonnie Franklin Jr. in the city's "Grim Sleeper" serial killings. (Franklin, who was sentenced to death for the killings of nine women and a teenage girl, died in prison in March 2020 at the age of 67.)

Ten years ago: Rupert Murdoch's media empire unexpectedly jettisoned News of the World, Britain's best-selling Sunday newspaper, after a public backlash over claims it had used phone hacking and other illegal tactics to expose the rich and famous, royals and ordinary citizens. A Texas Rangers fan, 39-year-old Shannon Stone, died from a fatal fall when reaching out to grab a baseball tossed his way by outfielder Josh Hamilton during a Rangers game. "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2," the final movie based on the wizard fantasy books, debuted in London on its way to becoming the year's top-grossing movie.

Five years ago: Micah Johnson, a Black Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, opened fire on Dallas police, killing five officers in an act of vengeance for the fatal police shootings of Black men; the attack ended with Johnson being killed by a bomb delivered by a police robot. President Barack Obama embarked on a five-day, two-country mission to buck up a beleaguered Europe and brush back an aggressive Moscow; after arriving in Warsaw, Poland, Obama denounced the fatal attack in Dallas as "despicable" and declared there was no justification for the violence.

One year ago: Texas surpassed 10,000 new coronavirus cases in a single day for the first time, as a resurgence of the outbreak raged across the U.S. Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro said he had tested positive for the coronavirus after months of downplaying its severity; he said he was already taking hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug unproven to treat COVID-19.

Today's Birthdays: Musician-conductor Doc Severinsen is 94. Pulitzer Prize-winning author David Mc-

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Cullough is 88. Rock star Ringo Starr is 81. Comedian Bill Oddie is 80. Singer-musician Warren Entner (The Grass Roots) is 78. Actor Joe Spano is 75. Pop singer David Hodo (The Village People) is 74. Country singer Linda Williams is 74. Actor Shelley Duvall is 72. Actor Roz Ryan is 70. Actor Billy Campbell is 62. Rock musician Mark White (Spin Doctors) is 59. Singer-songwriter Vonda Shepard is 58. Actor-comedian Jim Gaffigan is 55. R&B musician Ricky Kinchen (Mint Condition) is 55. Actor Amy Carlson is 53. Actor Jorja Fox is 53. Actor Cree Summer is 52. Actor Robin Weigert is 52. Actor Kirsten Vangsness is 49. Actor Troy Garity is 48. Actor Berenice Bejo (BEH'-ruh-nees BAY'-hoh) is 45. Actor Hamish Linklater is 45. Olympic silver and bronze medal figure skater Michelle Kwan is 41. Rapper Cassidy is 39. Country singer Gabbie Nolen is 39. Actor Ross Malinger is 37. Actor-comedian Luke Null (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 31. Pop singer Ally Hernandez (Fifth Harmony) (TV: "The X Factor") is 28. Pop musician Ashton Irwin (5 Seconds to Summer) is 27. Country singer Maddie Marlow (Maddie and Tae) is 26.