

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 1 of 68

- [1- Service Notice: Anna Rix](#)
- [1- GDILIVE: School Board](#)
- [2- State B American Jr. Legion Baseball Tournament](#)
- [2- Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller](#)
- [6- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [7- PrairieDoc: Laughter is the Best Medicine](#)
- [8- Sturgis Motorcycle Rally Numbers](#)
- [10- Groton City Council Aug. 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes](#)
- [12- Groton City: ORDINANCE NO. 749](#)
- [14- Westport Town Water/Sewer Rates Resolution](#)
- [15- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [16- Weather Pages](#)
- [19- Daily Devotional](#)
- [20- 2021 Community Events](#)
- [21- News from the Associated Press](#)

## Calendar Update

Version D of the Calendar has been updated to the 397news.com home page. The main update is the addition of page 2. The printed calendar will have two sides with one as the normal calendar and the back side will have all community events listed by dates. If there is something that needs to be added, please let me know ASAP as we hope to start printing tonight.

## Service Notice: Anna Rix

Funeral services for Anna Rix, 92 of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Thursday, August 12th at the United Methodist Church, Groton. Pastor Brandon Dunham will officiate. Burial will follow in Groton Union Cemetery, under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the funeral chapel on Wednesday from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m.

Ann passed away August 7, 2021 at her home.



**School Board Meeting**  
**Monday,**  
**Aug. 9, 2021**  
**7 p.m. -**  
**GHS Library**  
**Conference Room.**

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

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 2 of 68

## State B American Junior Legion Baseball Tournament

### Groton claims consolation championship title

Lake Norden got things moving in the first inning, when an error scored one run for Lake Norden.

Groton pulled away for good with three runs in the third inning. In the third Tate Larson singled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run and Jordan Bjerke singled on a 1-2 count, scoring one run.

Dillon Ablen pitched Groton to victory. The bulldog surrendered two runs on five hits over seven innings, striking out six and walking one.

Christain Rodriguez took the loss for Lake Norden. The bulldog allowed seven hits and four runs over five innings, striking out eight and walking zero.

Lake Norden collected five hits on the day. Turner Stevenson and Troy Randall each managed multiple hits for Lake Norden. Randall and Stevenson all had two hits to lead Lake Norden.

Ryan Groeblichhoff went 2-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton in hits.

"Powered by Narrative Science and GameChanger Media. Copyright 2021. All rights reserved."

## #459 in a series

### Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

I never thought we'd see this again: We're back over 100,000 new cases per day—not just on one day. That's our average, so we're sustaining that rate—10 times what we were seeing at the end of June. Last time we were over 100,000 was February 11. At midday today, we were looking at a seven-day new-case average of 108,468. Most of the surge is coming from places with low vaccination rates, and 97 percent of new cases are unvaccinated. Most of the states with high case numbers haven't peaked yet, which means it's going to get worse before it gets better. Florida has set a new high that matches the previous record of January 8, in the worst surge of the pandemic thus far and is still at 20 percent of US new cases, second-highest per capita after Louisiana. Test positivity in the state is 18.9 percent, far too high. Over 97 percent of us live in areas with "substantial" or "high" transmission based on per capita new cases and test positivity rates according to the CDC.

That's not all. Hospitalizations are soaring to a seven-day average of 57,873 with the actual number yesterday over 66,000, so it's continuing to rise. Here's another number that hasn't been this high since February. Hospitals in hot spots are under severe stress.

Texas has already once before been an epicenter for this pandemic in the US with hospitals overflowing with very sick people. Looks like things are headed that way again. The Texas Medical Center admitted over 300 patients on Thursday. Hospitals are having to ship patients out: A week ago, a patient was transferred from Houston as far as North Dakota, and a baby had to be sent to Tempe, Arizona this past week. Ambulances are waiting hours to unload patients in the city, which is slowing 911 response as they stay tied up. Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo said in a news conference this week, "Today we find ourselves retracing our steps toward the edge of a cliff. It is very conceivable that we could once again be heading toward a public health catastrophe."

Missouri hospitals are experiencing the same sorts of stresses: Ambulances have been set up across the state, prepared to transport patients as hospitals fill up. And Florida has the highest per capita hospitalization rate at 63 per 100,000 residents. The state continues to lead the nation in hospital admissions, and sixty percent of hospitals in the state will face a "critical staffing shortage" in the next week. All of that fits with the simple fact that Florida is now reporting more daily new cases than at any point in the entire pandemic. Louisiana set a record for hospitalizations on the same day, 89 percent of those folks

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 3 of 68

unvaccinated. Health officials in Mississippi say their situation is dire with only six ICU beds available in the entire state. Arkansas has a record low number of available ICU beds. This is disastrous.

Deaths have increased by 85 percent in two weeks from a seven-day average of 270 to 506 at midday today. The vast majority of these are unvaccinated, that is, preventable. Unnecessary.

The CDC's ensemble forecast has bad news for us. As many as 1,800,000 new cases are projected for the week ending August 28; we haven't seen increases like that since late January in the throes of our very worst days. Let's hope the low end of the projection comes true instead of worst-case. Hospitalizations and deaths are also projected to increase—we're looking at maybe 10,000 deaths per week by the end of the month. That would be a huge increase from the current rate which is high enough when we remember most of these folks don't have to die at all. We had the means to prevent these deaths.

Wisconsin is seeing a fair increase in case numbers, and some of that is likely associated with the Milwaukee Bucks NBA team's championship. In Milwaukee County, the seven-day new-case average went from 67 on July 20, the day of the last championship game to 315 Tuesday; that's pretty rapid growth. Statewide, they went from 223 to 962. It's clear something happened. What with attendance at home games, people gathering in bars to cheer the team on, watch parties in homes, and a crowd-packed parade for the victors on July 22, there has been ample opportunity, most of it unmasked, to acquire an infection. Almost 500 cases have been directly linked to the Deer District in Milwaukee where fans gathered to cheer the team on; this is just folks who self-reported having attended gatherings, which means it is highly likely to be an underreport. There's no way to be certain the infections were acquired in that setting, but the pattern seems pretty clear. Just over half the residents of Wisconsin are fully vaccinated, so there are plenty of susceptible folks around.

Vaccination rates continue to climb, which is excellent news. We're slightly up from a few days ago and 19 percent in the last week to 464,700 people initiating vaccination daily and 864,000 doses administered, highest in close to two months. We now have 50.1 of the population fully vaccinated—close to 70 percent of eligible people ages 12 and up. We're up about 12,000 doses per day—small, but let's take that for now. Seems to me we need to continue the last-mile sorts of outreach we're seeing now to underserved individuals who want and need vaccines, but have been inhibited from receiving them by work, family, and transmission situations. Some creative work has been done in this regard, and I'm hoping that continues so we get vaccine into everyone who's willing.

We should note that this week the world passed 200 million reported Covid-19 cases. That's bad, but when we consider the certainty this number is a massive undercount, the truth is far worse.

A study published in JAMA Network on Wednesday took a look at those cases of myocarditis and pericarditis in vaccinated individuals. We refer here to inflammation seen in the heart muscle (myocarditis) or the membranous covering enveloping the heart (pericarditis). The rate of development of these adverse events in this study was around 30 per million vaccinated individuals, more common in males, and varying with age. Myocarditis, more common in younger people, was more likely to develop after the second dose, and developed within a few days. All cases were temporary; those admitted to the hospital spent a median of two days hospitalized. Pericarditis was more likely in older individuals and took close to three weeks to develop. Median hospital stay for those hospitalized was one day. For comparison, the incidence of myocarditis in children with Covid-19 aged 12 to 17 was 876 per million for boys and 213 per million for girls.

It looks like the FDA's very close to amending vaccine Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA) to permit additional doses for the immunocompromised—probably within the next couple of weeks. There is a growing

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 4 of 68

body of evidence that a fair proportion of people who have not responded robustly to the initial course of vaccination (whether one-dose or two-dose, depending on which vaccine is used) do show improved responses after an additional dose. It looks like the folks on the FDA's list are people with cancer, organ or stem cell transplants, HIV, primary immunodeficiencies, asplenia (no spleen), advanced chronic kidney disease, and any condition that requires immunosuppressive medication, about seven million adults in the US. These people are clearly at risk; at just three percent of the adult population, they are accounting for 44 percent of hospitalizations from breakthrough infections. Vaccine effectiveness in this group runs around 59 percent while it's running in the 90s for other folks. I read a research letter from a group at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine which, in a study of medical records, found vaccinated transplant patients had a rate of infection 82 times and a rate of serious illness 485 times greater than a vaccinated member of the general public.

It remains to be seen whether such an extension would cover all three of the vaccines currently in use and whether a mix-and-match approach—giving the additional dose of a different vaccine from the one initially used—will be recommended. It is important to recognize that while the word, booster, is often used to describe a dose used this way, this is not a booster; it is an extension of the initial vaccination series for those who require more doses. Boosting is what happens when you have someone who has responded adequately, but you decide to extend or further improve their response. The WHO, which has soundly criticized countries giving booster doses while supplies are short, recognizes that these patients are in a different situation and does not criticize the use of additional doses of vaccine in this way.

A significant factor in this FDA decision is that we have good evidence immunosuppressed and partially immune people are fertile breeding grounds for new variants. An infection in such a person can linger for weeks or even months, and this is a situation which provides just the sort of selection pressure that pushes the emergence of mutations adapted to evading our immune responses. It is in everyone's interest to get immunosuppressed people as protected as they can be, and additional doses are the way to do it. There are, on the other hand, some safety concerns with giving additional doses to people whose responses are being deliberately suppressed; you can't afford to stir things up too much in those bodies. There has been one case in a study now underway where a heart transplant patient developed a mild rejection reaction after a third dose. There can also be flares of their condition in autoimmune patients when you bump up their immune responses. Patients experiencing these effects in studies so far have recovered, but it's a consideration—and also a good argument for folks not cowboying off to get third doses on their own without medical supervision.

There is a meeting scheduled next week of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). We don't have anything on a specific agenda, but it is being billed simply as a meeting on Covid-19. There appears to be sort of a general expectation that this topic is going to arise. Many physicians are urging the regulators to move on this, so I imagine they will at least examine the available data to see whether there appears to be enough of it to serve as basis for a decision.

The CDC did a fairly small study of Kentucky residents who were infected in 2020 to look at reinfection rates. The primary finding was that those who were not vaccinated were 2.34 times more likely to be infected than those who were vaccinated. That should put to bed the "I already had it, so I don't need a vaccine" arguments. Another CDC study conducted in 13 states in February through April of this year looked at the protections afforded by vaccination of those over 65. This one quantified the reduction in hospitalization in the vaccinated, and the results are pretty clear: The reduction in hospitalization ranged from 84 to 96 percent. That's a large effect in this most at-risk age group.

I've read another CDC study in Mesa County, Colorado, that was hit with a Delta surge in the late spring.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 5 of 68**

B.1.617.2 or Delta, you will recall, is the currently-dominant variant first identified in India. It found that when infection rate with Delta rose, it drove a wave in vaccinated people too. It also appeared to show that the variant caused more severe illness as indicated in the unvaccinated by ICU admissions and deaths. An estimate of what was called "crude efficacy" of the vaccines against symptomatic infection was found to be lower in Mesa County than in other counties where Delta was not as dominant, which the paper said could "lend support to previous findings that COVID-19 vaccines provide modestly lower protection against symptomatic infection with the Delta variant." So what we have here is real-world experience to layer over the laboratory testing that indicates the vaccines are somewhat less effective, but holding against the worse effects of Delta.

We have results from a clinical trial of the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine in South Africa. We've had only laboratory studies of its efficacy against the Delta variant so far, and these didn't clarify the picture very well; so this is useful information. I'll caution that this work has not yet been peer-reviewed. The trial was for a single dose, just as the vaccine has been given in the US, and it showed up to 95 percent efficacy against death from Delta. It didn't do quite as well against B.1.351 or Beta first identified in South Africa; we knew that one was giving our immune responses more trouble than the others. It's probably a good thing that one didn't spread more easily. When breakthrough infections with Delta occurred, 96 percent of cases were mild, and less than 0.05 were severe. That certainly looks as though we're not going to need to boost folks who've received that vaccine; it's looking pretty good.

I'm about to take a week off—first time I've done that since this whole adventure started back in February, 2020. In fact, there hasn't been a 24-hour period yet that I haven't at least done a bunch of reading and writing, even since I backed off to these less frequent Updates. My current plan is to check for anything big breaking every couple of days; but barring a cataclysm, I don't expect to be back here with another Update before Tuesday, August 17 at the soonest. In the meanwhile, please be careful, treat one another with kindness, and stay well, an increasingly difficult proposition in these fraught times. We'll talk next week.

## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Dominique Clare

The new-look Minnesota Vikings are getting to know each other very well during camp. The improved defense is pushing the offense to be better as there have been great matchups on both sides of the ball.

Unfortunately, camp has not been drama-free this year. It was announced that the Vikings have the lowest vaccination rate in the NFL with one of their players being starting quarterback Kirk Cousins. Because of the strict guidelines for unvaccinated players, Cousins had to miss several practices. This is something that is expected to hover over the Vikings season all year based on how many unvaccinated players they have.

On top of that Justin Jefferson gave Vikings fans an injury scare. The second-year all-pro receiver from LSU landed on his shoulder area funny after a collision with cornerback Bashaud Breeland. Jefferson received good news that it was just a sprain later that day. The Vikings updated his status to day to day.

The Vikings are now gearing up for their first preseason game. Here is everything you need to know and look out for.

Who do the Vikings play their first preseason game? The Vikings play their first preseason game against the Denver Broncos on Saturday, August 14th at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.

What are the top position battle to watch? The Vikings will be using the preseason to get a good look at several players that have a chance to have a significant role on the team.

The backup quarterback battle will be interesting to watch. Fans are excited for the rookie Kellen Mond, but it's looking like he is going to have to earn that spot. Jake Browning is making a push for the backup job after being the only quarterback available for camp when Cousins, Mond, and Stanley had to sit out due to the COVID-19 protocols.

Another position that has players battling is wide receiver. The top two spots are obviously Adam Thielen and Justin Jefferson. After that, it is wide open. The Vikings brought in Dede Westbrook right before camp. At the time it seemed like he was a lock for the 3rd receiver but others are giving him a run for his money. KJ Osborn has put together a nice camp and is looking like a legitimate 3rd receiver. The rookie Ihmir Smith-Marsette is also having a great camp. Westbrook is still working his way back to full strength so don't be surprised to see either of those two guys early on during the season,

Arguably the most important position battle for the Vikings is right guard. Right now that is between Dakota Dozier, Oli Udoh, and Wyatt Davis. Udoh is my favorite to win the position. He has received amazing feedback about his play and particularly his strength during camp.

What about the Broncos? I don't expect the Broncos to be a top team in the NFL this season but they do have the potential to be above average. Vikings fans will get a chance to see Teddy Bridgewater again, as he is currently the backup for Drew Lock on the Broncos. He should see a lot of minutes during the game. It will be a great team for the Vikings players to shake off the rust and officially kick off the season.

## Laughter is the Best Medicine

It is often said that laughter is the best medicine, yet I have never written a prescription for a funny movie, or a television comedy show, and I have no clowns or rubber chickens in my office. On the contrary, doctors are often expected to be serious and professional. Perhaps we are missing

a great opportunity to help heal. What if more doctors were like Dr. Patch Adams, who is known by the medical community for his quest to inject humor and laughter into the treatment of patients?

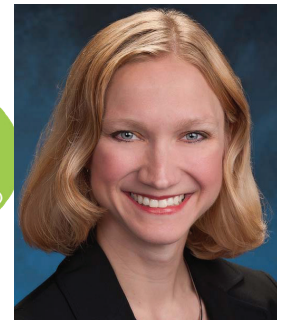
In medicine we work to cure disease. To cure means "to eliminate all evidence of disease." However, there is a second goal that we also have and that is to heal. To heal means "to become whole by strengthening the mind and spirit to improve the quality of life, even if, or when, no physical cure is possible." Laughter helps us heal. There have been multiple studies on what happens to the human body when we laugh. Research has been done on the importance of laughter from children to the elderly and no matter the age, laughter is the best medicine.

Due to the mind-body connection, laughing can aid your brain in producing chemicals that help your heart work better and pump more evenly. Laughing can assist in reducing pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers. A deep belly laugh benefits and enhances your intake of air, which stimulates the lungs and muscles. Laughter helps boost your body's immune system to help you prevent and fight off infections. It can also lower your stress level and give you more energy.

According to the American Heart Association, research has shown that laughing can decrease stress hormones, reduce artery inflammation, and increase your HDL (good cholesterol). Who knew that a laugh could do so much good? A study on adults age 65 and older in Japan showed that even after adjustment for high cholesterol, high blood pressure, depression, weight, and other risk factors, the frequency of heart diseases among those who never or almost never laughed was 1.21 times higher than those who reported laughing every day. In the same study, the risk of having a stroke was 1.60 times higher for those who almost never laughed compared to those who were full of mirth.

So, I will leave you with a few "treatments" to help improve your health today. Why did the pillow go to the doctor? Because he was feeling all stuffed up. Why did the cookie go to the hospital? He was feeling really crumbly. Does an apple a day keep the doctor away? Only if you aim it well enough. Did you hear the one about the germ? Never mind; I don't want to spread it around. Laughter is one medicine for which there is no maximum dose. Laugh often and well for a happy and healthy life.

Jill Kruse, D.O. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit [www.prairedoc.org](http://www.prairedoc.org) and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



By Jill Kruse, DO ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 8 of 68

## Sturgis Motorcycle Rally Numbers

Highway Patrol Sturgis Rally Daily Information  
Compiled from 6 a.m. Saturday August 7, 2021 to 6 a.m. Sunday August 8, 2021

Item	Sturgis	Rapid City District	District Total	Last Year to Date
DUI Arrests	16	4	20	26
Misd Drug Arrests	15	1	16	41
Felony Drug Arrests	3	1	4	17
Total Citations	159	62	221	226
Total Warnings	365	143	508	493
Cash Seized	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicles Seized	0	0	0	3
For Drug Poss.	0	0	0	3
For Serial No.	0	0	0	0
Non-Injury Accidents	1	3	4	6
Injury Accidents	5	4	9	12
Fatal Accidents	0	1	1	0
# of Fatalities	0	1	1	0

### Fatal Crashes:

At 11:52 a.m. Saturday, Interstate 90, mile marker 110, one mile west of Wall: A 2011 Harley-Davidson FLSTF motorcycle was westbound when the driver lost control. The vehicle hit a guard rail. The 36-year-old female driver, who was not wearing a helmet, was thrown from the motorcycle. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

### Injury Crashes:

At 7:32 a.m., Saturday, U.S. Highway 14A, mile marker 49, three miles west of Sturgis: A 2012 Harley-Davidson FLHR motorcycle was eastbound on U.S. Highway 14A when the driver failed to negotiate a curve. The motorcycle crossed into the westbound lane where it collided with a westbound 2012 Harley-Davidson FLHTCU motorcycle. The 60-year-old male driver of the FLHR motorcycle suffered minor injuries. Charges are pending against him. The 56-year-old female driver of the FLHTCU motorcycle was thrown from the motorcycle and suffered serious non-life threatening injuries. She was transported to the Sturgis hospital. Both drivers were wearing helmets.

At 10:49 a.m., Saturday, U.S. Highway 14A, mile marker 45, three miles east of Deadwood: A 1998 Honda Goldwing motorcycle was eastbound on U.S. Highway 14A when it struck a deer. The 59-year-old male driver received minor injuries and the 57-year-old female passenger sustained serious non-life threatening injuries. Both were wearing helmets and both were transported to the Deadwood hospital.



# Groton Daily Independent

**Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 9 of 68**

At 11:53 a.m., Saturday, intersection of Sturgis Road and Tilford Road, near Piedmont: Three motorcycles were southbound on Sturgis Road. A 2007 Harley-Davidson FXDBI motorcycle did not slow down in time and collided with the two motorcycles that were ahead of it. The 40-year-old male driver suffered serious non-life threatening injuries and was transported to the Sturgis Hospital. Charge is pending. The other two motorcycles were a 2006 Harley-Davidson and a 2000 Harley-Davidson FLTR. Both male drivers received minor injuries but were not transported. Helmets were not used.

At 12:45 p.m., Saturday, Vanocker Canyon Road, mile marker 12.5, four miles south of Sturgis: A 2000 Harley-Davidson STC motorcycle was southbound when the driver failed to negotiate a curve. The vehicle went onto the road's shoulder and struck a guard rail. The 57-year-old male driver was thrown from the motorcycle and sustained serious non-life threatening injuries. He was transported to the Sturgis hospital. He was not wearing a helmet.

At 1:12 p.m., Saturday, U.S. Highway 385, 12 miles west of Rapid City: A 2003 Harley-Davidson FLHT-CUI motorcycle was northbound on U.S. Highway 385 approaching the intersection of S.D. Highway 44 when the driver lost control and went into the ditch. The 61-year-old male driver suffered serious non-life threatening injuries and was transported to a Rapid City hospital. He was wearing a helmet.

At 2:40 p.m., Saturday, U.S. Highway 14A, mile marker 43, one mile east of Deadwood: A 1986 Harley-Davidson FXW motorcycle was eastbound on U.S. Highway 14A when the driver failed to negotiate a turn. The 49-year-old male driver and the 50-year-old female passenger both sustained serious non-life threatening injuries. Both were taken by ambulance to the Deadwood. Neither was wearing a helmet.

At 5:51 p.m., Saturday, U.S. Highway 16/385, mile marker 40, south side of Hill City: A 1997 Dodge 1500 pickup was westbound on U.S. Highway 16 and was preparing to make a left-hand turn into a campground. The driver failed to yield to an eastbound 2018 Harley-Davidson FLF motorcycle. The 20-year-old male driver of the motorcycle sustained minor injuries and was transported to a Rapid City hospital. The 21-year-old female passenger was not injured. Both were not wearing helmets. The 42-year-old male driver of the pickup was not injured and was not wearing a seat belt. Charges are pending against him.

At 11 p.m., Saturday, Fort Meade Way, two miles south of Fort Meade: A 2012 Ford Fusion was northbound on Fort Meade Way and collided with a southbound 2011 Harley-Davidson VST motorcycle. The 58-year-old male driver of the motorcycle sustained life-threatening injuries and was transported to a Rapid City hospital. He was not wearing a helmet. The 80-year-old female driver of the Fusion and two male passengers, ages 85 and 12, all suffered minor injuries and all were transported to the Sturgis hospital. All were wearing seat belts. Charges are pending against both drivers.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 10 of 68

## Groton City Council Aug. 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2021

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at 120 N Main Street for their first monthly meeting with the following members present: Wells, Blackmun, Bahr, Flihs, Babcock and Hanlon presiding. Also present were: Attorney Drew Johnson, Jeslyn Kosel, Rebecca Poor and Finance Officer Hope Block.

Public comments were welcomed pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1, but none were received.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Bahr and seconded by Wells. All members voted aye.

Moved by Flihs and seconded by Bahr to authorize the following bills for payment. All members voted aye.

Payroll	\$32,487.28	Employee salaries
Executive	\$733.77	
Administrative	\$3,759.52	
Public Safety	\$7,487.40	
Public Works	\$8,540.30	
Culture & Recreation	\$11,966.29	
Dacotah Bank	\$9,270.81	SS and WH
Dacotah Bank	\$495.82	HSA contributions
Dakotaland FCU	\$690.00	Employee savings
Aflac	\$309.60	Employee insurance
Allied	\$8,892.33	Employee insurance
Colonial Life	\$90.16	Employee insurance
Guardian Insurance	\$108.91	Employee insurance
Employers Mutual Ins	\$77.30	Employee insurance
SD Supplemental Retirement	\$430.00	Employee retirement
SD Retirement	\$7,480.56	Employee retirement
Railroad Management Co.	\$284.85	Power line crossing fee
Tate Larson	\$80.00	Umpire fee
Caleb Hanten	\$40.00	Umpire fee
Kaleb Hoover	\$160.00	Umpire fee
Evan Nehls	\$40.00	Umpire fee
Bradin Althoff	\$40.00	Umpire fee
Cole Simon	\$40.00	Umpire fee
SD Dept of Health	\$136.00	Water testing fee
Allied Climate Professionals	\$6,836.75	Community center air handler and condensing unit
My Turn Playsystems Inc	\$5,375.00	Wood chips for playgrounds
Paul Kosel	\$156.80	Mileage for Heartland Annual Meeting
Paul Kosel	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)
Susan Fjeldheim	\$364.00	Coaching mileage
Dairy Queen	\$92.40	Food for resale
BK Custom T's & More	\$150.00	Pool banner
Bell Lumber & Pole Co	\$9,004.00	New poles for Midco - will be reimbursed by them
Groton Ford	\$246.04	12 Ford cleaned mass air flow sensor and reset kam
MTI Distribution	\$40.96	Baseball field valve
Nelson Sales and Service	\$116.00	Chain sharpening
Runnings	\$63.73	Oil and saw bar
Galls	\$230.70	Police uniforms
S&S Lumber	\$630.28	Bolts, gloves, nuts, couplers, PVC adaptor, field marker, weed sprayer, paint, brushes, tape, zip ties, shields, garbage cans, parking paint, concrete drill bits, ant dust, batteries

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 11 of 68

NW Energy	\$1,726.91	Natural gas
TreeLine Tree Service Inc	\$3,000.00	Tree maintenance
Associated Supply Co.	\$597.45	Pool cleaner cord and suction hose
Dakota Supply Group	\$239.04	Baseball flush urinals, grease
Darrel's Sinclair	\$153.95	Battery for mosquito control pickup
Cole Papers	\$136.92	Trash bags
Drew Johnson	\$1,700.00	Legal fees 7/21
Coca Cola	\$4,398.00	Soda for resale
Aramark	\$26.44	Rug rent
Landon Johnson	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)
Branden Abeln	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)
April Abeln	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)
Kellie Locke	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)
Hope Block	\$100.00	Personal phone use (April-August)

Department reports were approved on a motion by Wells and seconded by Blackmun. All members voted aye.

An announcement was made that Groton received the Secretary's Award for Drinking Water Excellence 2020 for 20 consecutive years of safe drinking water to the City of Groton. Dwight Zerr and Terry Herron were thanked for making that possible.

The second reading of Ordinance #749 Regarding the Issuance of Local Medical Cannabis Establishment Permits and/or Licenses was approved on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Fliehs. All members voted aye.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Wells to approve the Maguire Iron's Application for Payment #9 for \$7,875. All members voted aye.

Moved by Fliehs and seconded by Babcock to approve Kellie Locke and Hope Block to attend the 2021 Annual SD Municipal League Conference October 5-8 in Spearfish. All members voted aye.

An announcement was made that Web Water increased water rates effective October 2021.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Bahr to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal items 1- 25-2 (1) & (3) at 7:28pm. All members voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 7:43pm.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Babcock to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm. All members voted aye.

---

Scott Hanlon, Mayor

Hope Block, Finance Officer

## **ORDINANCE NO. 749**

### **AN ORDINANCE REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF LOCAL MEDICAL CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENT PERMITS AND/OR LICENSES.**

WHEREAS, a local government may enact an ordinance not in conflict with SDCL Chapter 34-20G, governing the time, place, manner, and number of medical cannabis establishments in the locality. A local government may establish civil penalties for violation of an ordinance governing the time, place, and manner of a medical cannabis establishment that may operate in the locality. A local government may require a medical cannabis establishment to obtain a local license, zoning permit, or registration to operate, and may charge a reasonable fee for the local license, zoning permit, or registration.

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Groton, SD, makes a preliminary finding that the Municipality's current regulations and controls may not adequately address the unique needs and impacts of medical cannabis establishments as defined in SDCL 34-20G-1;

WHEREAS, medical cannabis state laws under SDCL 34-20G are effective July 1, 2021. The South Dakota Department of Health shall promulgate rules pursuant to chapter 1-26 not later than October 29, 2021, as defined by SDCL 34-20G-72. During the time between July 1, 2021 and potentially as late as October 29, 2021, local units of government will not yet know standards for medical cannabis and will not be able to adequately assess the local zoning and licensing requirements necessary to approve local permits and to better ensure applicants have a more predictable permitting process and avoid stranded investments.

WHEREAS, the Municipality makes a preliminary finding that the Municipality needs further study of the relationship of medical cannabis establishments to the City of Groton's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The public interest requires that the Municipality study, analyze, and evaluate the impacts of medical cannabis establishments and to fully explore the impacts of any proposed regulations regarding medical cannabis establishments;

WHEREAS, the Municipality makes a preliminary finding that it would be inappropriate for the Municipality to issue a local permit or license to a medical cannabis establishment prior to the South Dakota Department of Health's promulgation of regulations governing the same;

WHEREAS, the Municipality hereby exercises its authority under SDCL 11-4-3.1 and/or SDCL 9-19-13, to establish a temporary ordinance regarding the issuance of any local permits/licenses for medical cannabis establishments within the Municipality;

WHEREAS, a temporary ordinance will ensure that more comprehensive zoning ordinance and building permit changes, licensing permits, and any proposed amendments to the Municipality's Comprehensive Plan can be completely examined with adequate public input from citizens, business interests, and medical cannabis industry representatives;

WHEREAS, the Municipality finds that a temporary ordinance is reasonable to preserve the status quo and prevent significant investment pending the outcome of the above study and any proposed regulations emanating therefrom;

WHEREAS, the Municipality finds that the following ordinance is necessary to protect and immediately preserve the public health, safety, welfare, peace and support of the municipal government and its existing public institutions;

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 13 of 68

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF GROTON, SD:

## Section 1. Temporary Ordinance - Application for Local Permit/License

A medical cannabis establishment desiring to operate in the Municipality shall be required to apply for a permit and/or license from the Municipality. Applications for a local permit and/or license to operate a medical cannabis establishment, as defined by SDCL 34-20G-1, shall not be accepted until the South Dakota Department of Health has promulgated regulations as required by SDCL 30-20G-72. Any application received prior to such regulations being promulgated shall be denied.

## Section 2. Immediate Effect.

This ordinance is necessary to protect and immediately preserve the public health, safety, welfare, peace, and support of the municipal government and its existing public institutions pursuant to SDCL 11-4-3.1 and SDCL 9-19-13.

First Reading: July 20, 2021

Second Reading: August 3, 2021

Date Published: August 11, 2021

Effective Date: August 31, 2021

ATTEST:

Hope Block, Municipality Finance Officer  
Scott Hanlon, Mayor

## Westport Town Water/Sewer Rates Resolution

RESOLUTION #2021-15

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH NEW WATER/ SEWER RATES FOR THE CITY OF WESTPORT, SD.

WHEREAS, the current water rates are not sufficient enough to cover the cost of distributing water and provide for upgrade of the water delivery infrastructure.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Westport City Council for Westport, South Dakota, that water/sewer rates for all residential and commercial users shall be as follows:

Each consumer shall pay a minimum charge of \$50.00 dollars per month base fee. Water used during such month shall be at the rate of \$6.25 per one thousand (1,000) gallons and the overage rate is \$10.00 for over 12,000 gallons used.

Those consumers that have a hook up to the city water, but it is not currently using, will continue to pay and inactive fee of \$40.00 a month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these water rates shall go into effect payable October 1st, 2021

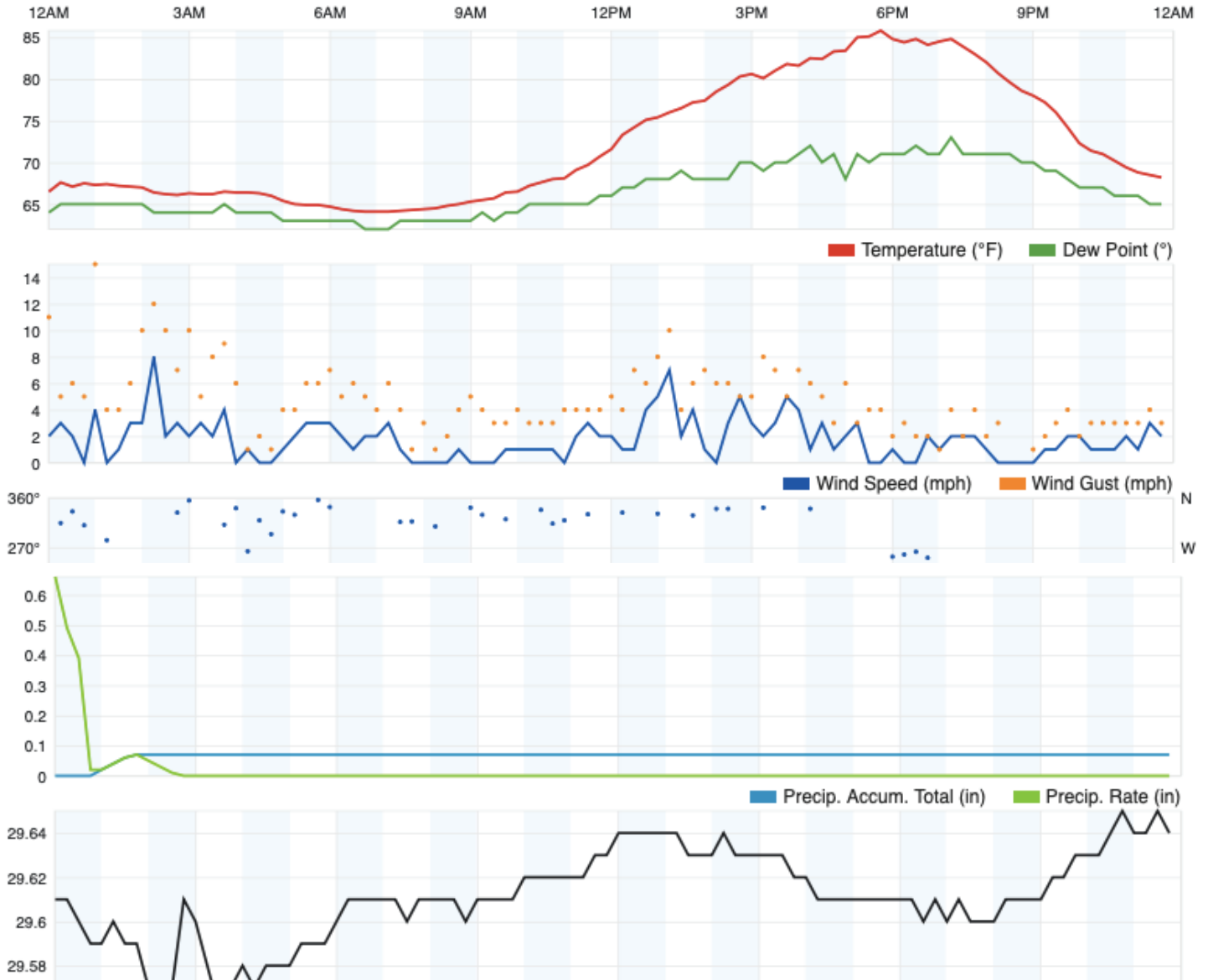
Dated this 2nd day of August, 2021.

Mitchell Wilson, Board President  
Doreen Hertel, Finance Officer

# Groton Daily Independent






Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 15 of 68

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 16 of 68

Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Patchy Fog then Sunny	Chance T-storms then Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Increasing Clouds	Sunny
High: 93 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 85 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 88 °F

## SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

ISSUED: 4:17 AM - Monday, August 9, 2021

### WHEN

Late afternoon through tonight.

### WHAT

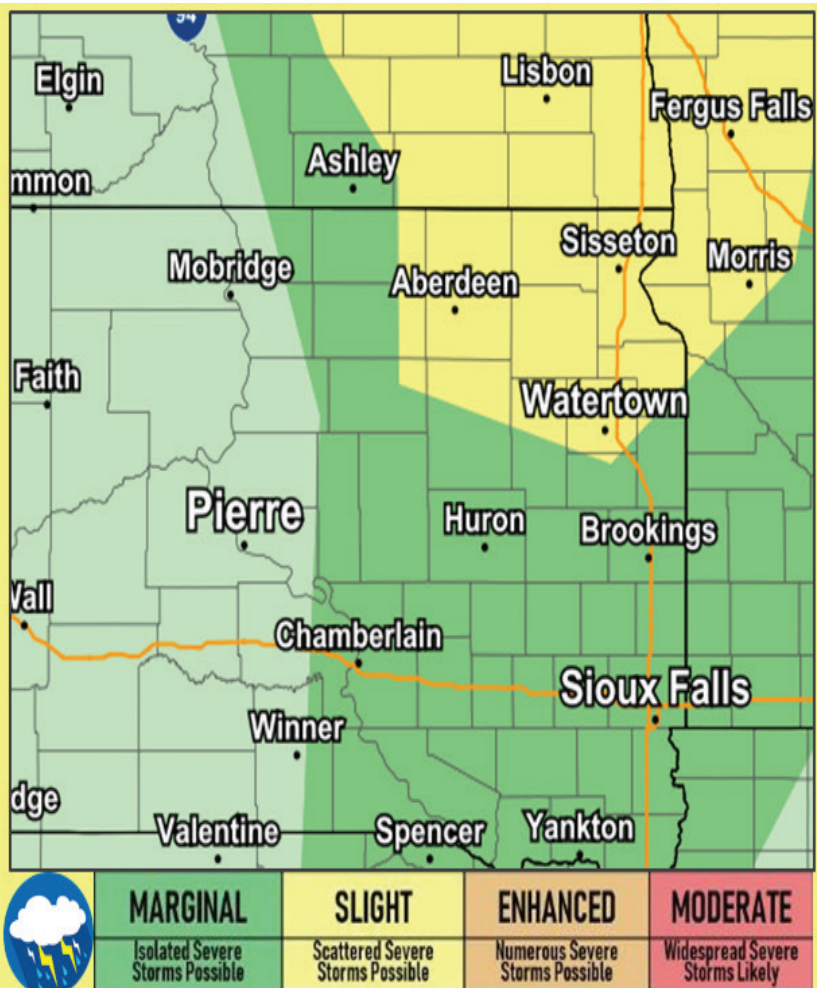
Storms may develop along a cold front which will track from west to east across the region. Scattered severe thunderstorms are possible. The main threats are **damaging wind gusts** and **large hail**.

### WHERE

North central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota.

### ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if severe weather approaches your area.



A cold front will track from west to east across the Dakotas today. Strong northwest winds are expected to follow behind the front, especially west of the Missouri River. By the time the front reaches central South Dakota thunderstorms may begin to develop. Some storms may be severe with damaging winds and large hail possible. Cooler and drier air follows for Tuesday.



## Today in Weather History

August 9, 1918: An estimated F2 tornado touched down east of Bristol, South Dakota, and moved NNE. The tornado was said to look like a long snake in a spiral, smashing barns into kindling.

August 9, 1992: A tornado packing winds estimated between 113 and 157 mph caused significant damage to the town of Chester, in Lake County. Shortly after 7 pm CDT a tornado tore right through the heart of Chester causing considerable damage. Four businesses were destroyed, three others had significant damage, and five had minor damage. An elevator and new grain bin were leveled, and another bin was heavily damaged. Most of the building housing the fire department was demolished. Also, many houses and vehicles sustained damage, and large trees were uprooted or broken off. In one instance a steel beam was thrust through a garage and into the car inside. One mile north of Chester, an entire house was moved off the foundation. The town had to be evacuated for 19 hours after the tornado because the tornado damaged a 12,000-gallon ammonia tank releasing 4,000 gallons of the liquid gas into the air. The ammonia was a health hazard forcing residents out. To the south of Chester, the storm destroyed a new convenience store and blew two fuel tanks over 100 yards.

1878: The second deadliest tornado in New England history struck Wallingford, Connecticut, killing 34 persons, injuring 100 others, and destroying thirty homes. The tornado started as a waterspout over a dam on the Quinnipiac River. It was 400 to 600 feet wide and had a short path length of two miles. The deadliest New England tornado occurred in 1953 when an F4 killed 90 people in Worcester, Massachusetts.

1969: An F3 tornado hit Cincinnati, Ohio, killing four persons and causing fifteen million dollars property damage. The tornado moved in a southeasterly direction at 40 to 50 mph.

1878 - The second most deadly tornado in New England history struck Wallingford CT killing 34 persons, injuring 100 others, and completely destroying thirty homes. The tornado started as a waterspout over a dam on the Quinnipiac River. It was 400 to 600 feet wide, and had a short path length of two miles. (The Weather Channel)

1969 - A tornado hit Cincinnati OH killing four persons and causing fifteen million dollars property damage. The tornado moved in a southeasterly direction at 40 to 50 mph. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Florida baked in the summer heat. Nine cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Jacksonville with a reading of 101 degrees. Miami FL reported a record high of 98 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Tropical Storm Beryl deluged Biloxi with 6.32 inches of rain in 24 hours, and in three days drenched Pascagoula MS with 15.85 inches of rain. Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region and over the Central High Plains Region. Thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced wind gusts to 92 mph at Harrah. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Evening thunderstorms in Arizona deluged Yuma with record torrential rains for the second time in two weeks. The rainfall total of 5.25 inches at the Yuma Quartermaster Depot established a state 24 hour record, and was nearly double the normal annual rainfall. Some of the homes were left with four feet of water in them. Seventy-six cities in the south central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. Lake Charles LA equalled their record for August with a low of 61 degrees. Canaan Valley WV was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 32 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

# Groton Daily Independent

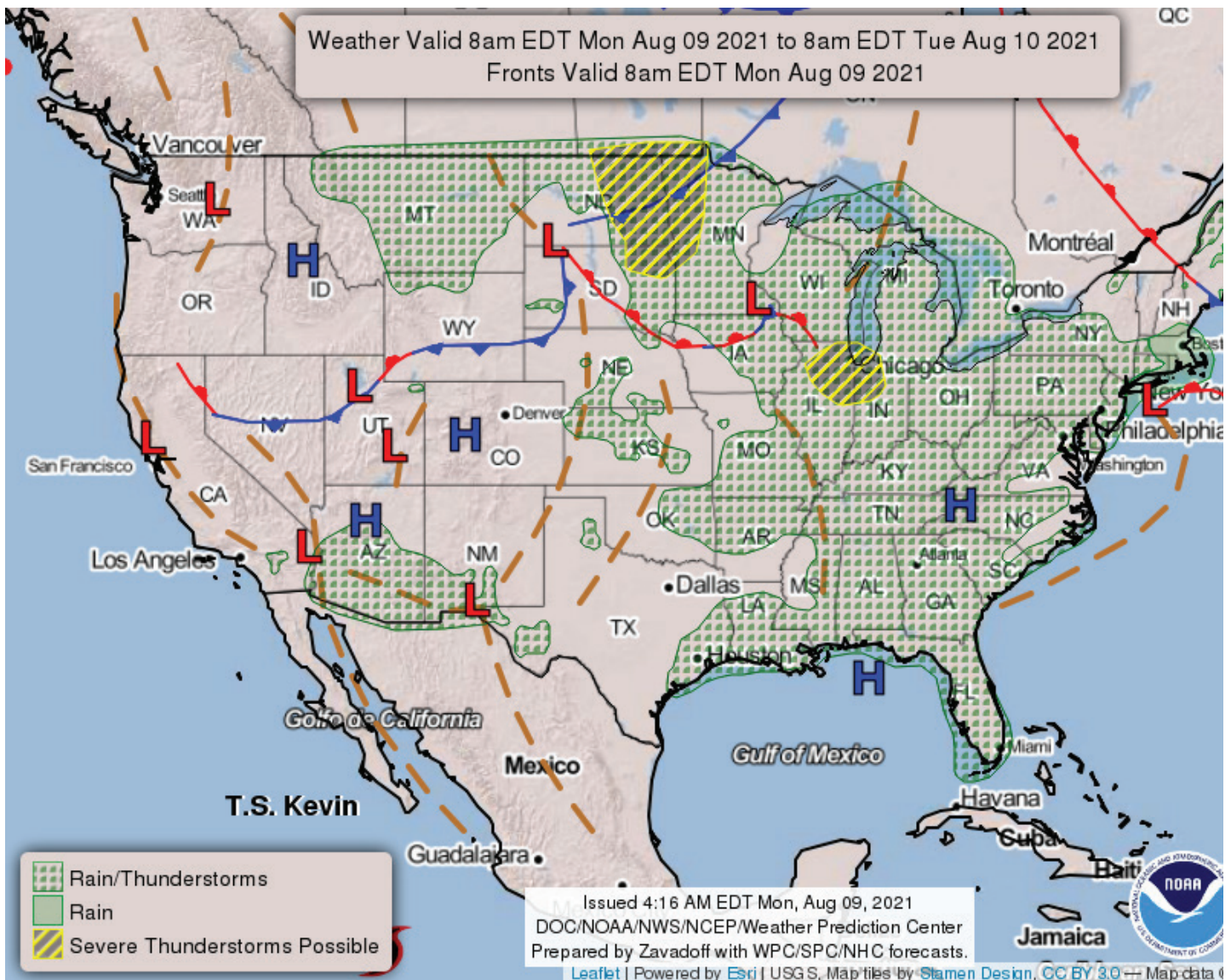
Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 18 of 68

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 85.8 °F at 5:45 PM**  
**Low Temp: 64.1 °F at 7:15 AM**  
**Wind: 15 mph at 1:00 AM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 105° in 1947**  
**Record Low: 41° in 1927**  
**Average High: 84°F**  
**Average Low: 58°F**  
**Average Precip in Aug.: 0.58**  
**Precip to date in Aug.: 1.12**  
**Average Precip to date: 14.68**  
**Precip Year to Date: 8.39**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:50 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:29 a.m.**



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 19 of 68



## ALMOST/NOT YET

Most of us have a memory or two of family trips we took when we were children. Excitement filled our hearts as we left on our journey. Then, after awhile, boredom and restlessness set in and everyone becomes anxious and angry and we begging to wonder why we ever left home. No matter where we were going or how long it took, someone would ask the question, "Are we there yet?" It is a question that is handed down from one generation to the next and one family to another. It's part of life and every family vacation.

And the answer was and still is the same: "Almost" or "Not yet." It can remind us of the fact that life is indeed a journey and we are never sure where or when it will end.

It is difficult to face the uncertainties of life wondering when there will be some final resolution to the issues that surround us and threaten us constantly. We are troubled when we see injustice and feel deceived. We want to be free from the fear and threat of terrorism and enjoy the reign of peace and joy. We hear of wars and rumors of wars. We are forced to face the fact that conflict and crises pervade our world and disturb our lives. And the peace that the leaders of this world promise us, never comes. Never!

So we call on God and ask, "Are we there yet? Is it time for Your return?" And He answers, "Almost. Not yet. My time has not come. You and I still have work to do."

We as Christians have His light in this darkness and His hope in the midst of despair. It is our responsibility to share the gifts of His love and light, healing and hope, peace and presence, grace and gifts with others so they can pray with us: Come, Lord Jesus -come!

Prayer: Father, thank You for Your mercy that saves us, Your grace to sustain us, Your peace that is alive within us, and Your hope that encourages us! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Psalm 88:1, 2 Lord, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 20 of 68

## 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  
08/29/2021 Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day at GHS Parking Lot (4-5 p.m.)  
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  
10/29/2021 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween) 5:30-7:00  
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)  
12/04/2021 Olive Grove Tour of Homes  
12/11/2021 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-Noon

## News from the Associated Press

### **No judging with Watertown group addressing suicides**

By KELLY DRAGER Watertown Public Opinion

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — The Codington County area has seen six suicides so far this year. Four of them were of people under the age of 20.

These numbers are alarming to Kelli Rumpza, a youth coordinator for the NE Prevention Resource Center, and growing concern for the mental health of youth in the community

The 2019 Live in the Path of Hope event saw up to 300 people. The 2020 event was held virtually because of COVID-19 restrictions.

In her job, Rumpza primarily addresses substance abuse in young individuals from ages 10 to 24. With the increasing number of youth suicides, the organization is also focusing on mental health.

"We see a lot of coexistence with mental health and people using substances as a coping mechanism," Rumpza said. "We are here to meet people where they are at and help them make changes in their life. Our job is not to judge but to be there and guide them along their journey."

There has been an increase in anxiety and depression in young people, said Rumpza. To help the community combat this, the resource center coaches individuals on how to self-care, the Watertown Public Opinion reported.

"A big piece is reflecting on how you take care of yourself. What influences you and what is your perception of different things?" she said.

Self-care is an important skill that individuals need, from the youngest child to the elderly. Being self-aware and caring for one's self is a critical factor in suicide prevention.

"Sometimes they are in so much pain, they don't know how to ask for help," Rumpza said. "Specifically in the Midwest where we are expected to take care of ourselves and don't want to bother other people. We have the mindset that we need to buck up and own it. Most people can move on. But for people suffering from suicidal thoughts, they don't know how to deal with it, and they cannot think beyond the right here, the right now."

Mental health disorders are not the only factor when dealing with suicide. Rumpza said that it is not always from depression and anxiety disorders, and suicidal thoughts can arise in people who are overwhelmed or are experiencing loss.

"There are many types of loss — the loss of income; loss of a family member, pets; a change in their community. It's something that they feel hopeless and helpless about. These people are going through so much pain. Pain we cannot even comprehend. They feel like this is the only way they can be released from this pain," she said.

The topic of suicide in itself also plays a role in its prevention. A community that speaks openly provides an opportunity for those suffering to express where they are with their thoughts and feelings.

"There is a lot of misunderstandings and stigma with suicide. We need to create a space where those who have lost someone to suicide feel comfortable talking about it. Suicide is something that makes people really uncomfortable. It's even hard for me sometimes to talk about it," Rumpza said.

To help fight against the stigma and negativity, there is an active shift away from how the act of ending one's life is termed.

"When you say 'committed suicide,' you think of it as a crime, as a negative. We've been focusing on the language. Terming it 'they died by suicide' or they 'suicided.' It's not a criminal thing. It's something they are dealing with. It's something that happened to them," said she said.

To help bring awareness and provide support to the community, Glacial Lakes SAFE sponsors Live in the Path of Hope, an annual 5-kilometer walk, run and remembrance ceremony. The event is the first Wednesday every September. The month of September is Suicide Awareness Month.

This is the seventh year of the event, and it is often framed around campaigns to help encourage people

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 22 of 68

to participate. Rumpza said the 5K and remembrance event are emotionally powerful and have helped several heal from the pain of suicide.

"The reason why we all come together is such a sad reason, but it's so empowering and caring. It's bringing everyone together and knowing that others have struggled as well. You might be struggling, or you might know someone that is struggling, but we want them to know there are resources and caring people available to help them thrive and make it on to the next day. To let them know that we want them to keep going. We want them to stay," she said.

## **Official: Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is the busiest in years**

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Law enforcement officials say the first few days of this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally have been among the busiest they've seen.

Some 700,000 people were expected to celebrate their enthusiasm for motorcycles at the 10-day event that kicked off Friday in the western South Dakota city.

"There are more people here than in the 31 years I've been doing this," Meade County Sheriff Ron Merwin told the Rapid City Journal on Saturday.

Law enforcement in Sturgis and Meade County are reporting their calls for service during the first few days are up dramatically compared to previous years.

Sturgis Police Chief Geody VanDewater said officers have issued 207 violations for open containers of alcohol since Friday.

The city allows open containers of beer and wine, but not liquor, during the rally in certain downtown areas, but drinkers must purchase a special cup to do so.

"You can't use cans or red cups. You must use the official souvenir cup purchased from the city and have a wrist band," VanDewater said.

The chief said only two arrests have been made for open container violations because the patrons were uncooperative, the rest have been verbal warnings.

Arrests have also been made for drugs and traffic violations, police reported.

The sheriff's office has responded to dozens of calls for service since Friday. Merwin said the largest amount of calls are traffic stops and accidents, which so far compared to last year are nearly double.

Sturgis skipped the formal rally last year because of the coronavirus pandemic, but thousands of bikers flocked to the city anyway, leading to hundreds of coronavirus infections.

## **Taliban press on, take another Afghan provincial capital**

By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban on Monday took control of another provincial capital in Afghanistan, an official said. The city's fall was the latest in a weekslong, relentless Taliban offensive as American and NATO forces finalize their pullout from the war-torn country.

The militants have ramped up their push across much of Afghanistan, turning their guns on provincial capitals after taking large swaths of land in the mostly rural countryside. At the same time, they have been waging an assassination campaign targeting senior government officials in the capital, Kabul.

The sweep comes despite condemnations by the international community and warnings from the United Nations that a military victory and takeover by the Taliban would not be recognized. The Taliban have also not heeded appeals to return to the negotiating table and continue long-stalled peace talks with the Afghan government.

According to Mohammad Noor Rahmani, the council chief of northern Sar-e Pul province, the Taliban overran the provincial capital after over a week of resistance by the Afghan security forces, after which the city of Sar-e Pul collapsed. The government forces have now completely withdrawn from the province, he said.

Several pro-government local militia commanders also surrendered to the Taliban without a fight, allowing the insurgents to gain control of the entire province, Rahmani added.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 23 of 68

The city of Sar-e Pul joins three other provincial capitals now fully under Taliban control: Zaranj, the capital of western Nimroz province, the city of Shibirghan, the capital of northern Zawzjan province, and Taleqan, the capital of another northern province with the same name.

The Taliban are also fighting on for control of the city of Kunduz, the capital of northern Kunduz province. On Sunday, they planted their flag in the city's main square, where it was seen flying atop a traffic police booth, a video obtained by The Associated Press showed.

Kunduz's capture would be a significant gain for the Taliban and a test of their ability to take and retain territory in their campaign against the Western-backed government. It is one of the country's larger cities with a population of more than 340,000, and was a key area defended against Taliban takeovers by Western troops over the years.

After billions of dollars spent in aiding, training and shoring up Afghan forces, many are at odds how to explain the surprising Taliban blitz that has threatened — and by now taken — several of the country's 34 provincial capitals.

Rahmani, the council chief in Sar-e Pul, said the provincial capital had been under siege by the militants for weeks, with no reinforcements being sent to the overstretched Afghan forces. A video circulating on social media Monday shows a number of Taliban fighters, standing in front of the Sar-e Pul governor's office and congratulating each other for the victory.

The country-wide Taliban offensive intensified as U.S. and NATO troops began to wrap up their withdrawal from Afghanistan this summer. With Taliban attacks increasing, Afghan security forces and government troops have retaliated with airstrikes aided by the United States. The fighting has also raised growing concerns about civilian casualties.

On Monday, UNICEF said it was shocked by the increasing number of casualties among children amid the escalating violence in Afghanistan. Over the past three days, at least 27 children have been killed in various provinces, including 20 in Kandahar, it said.

"These atrocities are also evidence of the brutal nature and scale of violence in Afghanistan which preys on already vulnerable children," the agency said. It did not identify the side responsible for the killings. UNICEF also raised the alarm over what it said was increased recruitment of children by armed groups.

The Taliban have also taken most of Lashkar Gah, the capital of southern Helmand province, where they took nine of the 10 police districts in the city last week. Heavy fighting there continues, as do U.S. and Afghan government airstrikes, one of which damaged a health clinic and a high school.

The Defense Ministry confirmed airstrikes occurred but said they targeted Taliban positions, killing 54 fighters and wounding 23. Its statement made no mention of a clinic or school being bombed. Deputy provincial council chairman Majid Akhund said the facilities had been under Taliban control when they were struck.

On Saturday, Taliban fighters entered the capital of the northern Jawzjan province after sweeping through nine of 10 districts in the province. And the city of Kandahar, the provincial capital of Kandahar, also remains under siege.

As they rolled through provincial capitals, the Taliban issued an English language statement on Sunday saying that residents, government employees, and security officials had nothing to fear from them.

However, revenge attacks and repressive treatment of women have been reported in areas now under Taliban control.

## 'Nowhere to run': UN report says global warming nears limits

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Earth's climate is getting so hot that temperatures in about a decade will probably blow past a level of warming that world leaders have sought to prevent, according to a report released Monday that the United Nations called a "code red for humanity."

"It's just guaranteed that it's going to get worse," said report co-author Linda Mearns, a senior climate scientist at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research. "Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide."

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 24 of 68

But scientists also eased back a bit on the likelihood of the absolute worst climate catastrophes.

The authoritative Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, which calls climate change clearly human-caused and "unequivocal," makes more precise and warmer forecasts for the 21st century than it did last time it was issued in 2013.

Each of five scenarios for the future, based on how much carbon emissions are cut, passes the more stringent of two thresholds set in the 2015 Paris climate agreement. World leaders agreed then to try to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above levels in the late 19th century because problems mount quickly after that. The world has already warmed nearly 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) in the past century and a half.

Under each scenario, the report said, the world will cross the 1.5 degrees Celsius warming mark in the 2030s, earlier than some past predictions. Warming has ramped up in recent years, data shows.

"Our report shows that we need to be prepared for going into that level of warming in the coming decades. But we can avoid further levels of warming by acting on greenhouse gas emissions," said report co-chair Valerie Masson-Delmotte, a climate scientist at France's Laboratory of Climate and Environment Sciences at the University of Paris-Saclay.

In three scenarios, the world will also likely exceed 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial times — the other, less stringent Paris goal — with far worse heat waves, droughts and flood-inducing downpours "unless deep reductions in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades," the report said.

"This report tells us that recent changes in the climate are widespread, rapid and intensifying, unprecedented in thousands of years," said IPCC Vice Chair Ko Barrett, senior climate adviser for the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The 3,000-plus-page report from 234 scientists said warming is already accelerating sea level rise and worsening extremes such as heat waves, droughts, floods and storms. Tropical cyclones are getting stronger and wetter, while Arctic sea ice is dwindling in the summer and permafrost is thawing. All of these trends will get worse, the report said.

For example, the kind of heat wave that used to happen only once every 50 years now happens once a decade, and if the world warms another degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), it will happen twice every seven years, the report said.

As the planet warms, places will get hit more not just by extreme weather but by multiple climate disasters at once, the report said. That's like what's now happening in the Western U.S., where heat waves, drought and wildfires compound the damage, Mearns said. Extreme heat is also driving massive fires in Greece and Turkey.

Some harm from climate change — dwindling ice sheets, rising sea levels and changes in the oceans as they lose oxygen and become more acidic — is "irreversible for centuries to millennia," the report said.

The world is "locked in" to 15 to 30 centimeters (6 to 12 inches) of sea level rise by mid-century, said report co-author Bob Kopp of Rutgers University.

Scientists have issued this message for more than three decades, but the world hasn't listened, said United Nations Environment Program Executive Director Inger Andersen.

Nearly all of the warming that has happened on Earth can be blamed on emissions of heat-trapping gases such as carbon dioxide and methane. At most, natural forces or simple randomness can explain one- or two-tenths of a degree of warming, the report said.

The report described five different future scenarios based on how much the world reduces carbon emissions. They are: a future with incredibly large and quick pollution cuts; another with intense pollution cuts but not quite as massive; a scenario with moderate emission cuts; a fourth scenario where current plans to make small pollution reductions continue; and a fifth possible future involving continued increases in carbon pollution.

In five previous reports, the world was on that final hottest path, often nicknamed "business as usual." But this time, the world is somewhere between the moderate path and the small pollution reductions



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 25 of 68

scenario because of progress to curb climate change, said report co-author Claudia Tebaldi, a scientist at the U.S. Pacific Northwest National Lab.

While calling the report "a code red for humanity," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres kept a sliver of hope that world leaders could still somehow prevent 1.5 degrees of warming, which he said is "perilously close."

There is also a way for the world to stay at the 1.5-degree threshold with extreme and quick emission cuts, but even then, temperatures would rise 1.5 degrees Celsius in a decade and even beyond, before coming back down, said co-author Maisia Rojas Corrada, director of the Center for Climate and Resilience Research in Chile.

"Anything we can do to limit, to slow down, is going to pay off," Tebaldi said. "And if we cannot get to 1.5, it's probably going to be painful, but it's better not to give up."

In the report's worst-case scenario, the world could be around 3.3 degrees Celsius (5.9 degrees Fahrenheit) hotter than now by the end of the century. But that scenario looks increasingly unlikely, said report co-author and climate scientist Zeke Hausfather, climate change director of the Breakthrough Institute.

"We are a lot less likely to get lucky and end up with less warming than we thought," Hausfather said. "At the same time, the odds of ending up in a much worse place than we expected if we do reduce our emissions are notably lower."

A "major advance" in the understanding of how fast the world warms with each ton of carbon dioxide emitted allowed scientists to be far more precise in the scenarios in this report, Mason-Delmotte said.

The report said ultra-catastrophic disasters — commonly called "tipping points," like ice sheet collapses and the abrupt slowdown of ocean currents — are "low likelihood" but cannot be ruled out. The much talked-about shutdown of Atlantic ocean currents, which would trigger massive weather shifts, is something that's unlikely to happen in this century, Kopp said.

The report "provides a strong sense of urgency to do even more," said Jane Lubchenco, the White House deputy science adviser.

In a new move, scientists emphasized how cutting airborne levels of methane — a powerful but short-lived gas that has soared to record levels — could help curb short-term warming. Lots of methane the atmosphere comes from leaks of natural gas, a major power source. Livestock also produces large amounts of the gas, a good chunk of it in cattle burps.

More than 100 countries have made informal pledges to achieve "net zero" human-caused carbon dioxide emissions sometime around mid-century, which will be a key part of climate negotiations this fall in Scotland. The report said those commitments are essential.

"It is still possible to forestall many of the most dire impacts," Barrett said.

## Cuomo isolated as accuser set to speak in first TV interview

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo faces another day under fire Monday as a key legislative committee meets to discuss possible impeachment proceedings and a woman who has accused him of groping her speaks in her first TV interview.

"CBS This Morning" is scheduled to broadcast the first TV interview with Brittany Commisso, an executive assistant who accused Cuomo of groping her breast at the governor's mansion in Albany.

Commisso last week became the first woman to file a criminal complaint against Cuomo, giving a report to the county sheriff.

Cuomo has denied touching any women inappropriately and said the groping incident never happened.

Later Monday, the state Assembly's judiciary committee planned to meet to discuss how to wrap up an ongoing investigation into whether there are grounds to impeach Cuomo.

Scores of Democrats, including President Joe Biden, have urged him to leave office. About two-thirds of state Assembly members have already said they favor an impeachment trial if he refuses to resign. Only a simple majority vote is needed to begin an impeachment trial.

Cuomo will be going into the fight without his former top aide, Melissa DeRosa.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 26 of 68

DeRosa, a steady presence at Cuomo's side during his months of coronavirus news conferences, resigned late Sunday, saying the past two years had been "emotionally and mentally trying."

The administration has been in crisis since last week, when a report made public by state Attorney General Letitia James concluded that Cuomo sexually harassed 11 women.

Cuomo's lawyers have attacked the attorney general's investigation as biased in favor of his female accusers.

At least five district attorneys have asked for materials from the attorney general's inquiry to see if any of the allegations could result in criminal charges. Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple said Saturday that Cuomo could face misdemeanor charges if investigators substantiate Commisso's complaint.

The Associated Press does not generally identify alleged victims of sexual misconduct unless they decide to speak out publicly, as Commisso has done.

## Massive forest fire in Greece still burning for 7th day

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Firefighters and residents battled a massive forest fire on Greece's second largest island for a seventh day Monday, fighting to save what they can from flames that have decimated vast tracts of pristine forest, destroyed homes and businesses and sent thousands fleeing.

The smoke and ash from the fire on Evia, a rugged island of forests and coves almost touching the Greek mainland, blocked out the sun, turning the sky orange as the blaze rampaged across the northern part of the island.

Evia's fire is the most severe of dozens that have broken out across Greece in the past week, after the country was baked by its worst heat wave in three decades which sent temperatures soaring to 45 degrees Celsius (113 Fahrenheit) for days. The heat, coming amid what has already been a particularly hot summer, has turned Greece's forests, including large areas of easily flammable pine trees, into bone-dry tinderboxes.

Other big fires have been burning forests and farmland in the southern Greek region of the Peloponnese, while a major blaze that burned through homes, businesses and forests on the northern fringes of Athens was on the wane.

The wildfires have stretched Greece's firefighting capabilities to the limit, and the government has appealed for help from abroad. More than 20 countries in Europe and the Mideast have responded, sending planes, helicopters, vehicles and manpower.

But many residents and local officials have complained of a lack of firefighters, and some have taken to calling in to Greek television networks to appeal for help, particularly from water-dropping planes and helicopters.

"We were completely forsaken. There were no fire brigades, there were no vehicles, nothing!" said David Angelou, who had been on Evia in the seaside village of Pefki and left the island by ferry to the mainland harbor of Arkitsa Sunday night.

"You could feel the enormous heat, there was also a lot of smoke. You could see the sun, a red ball, and then, nothing else around," he said.

Greece's Civil Protection chief, Nikos Hardalias, has stressed that firefighters have been doing everything they can. On Sunday, a small firefighting plane crashed on the western Greek island of Zakynthos while fighting a smaller fire there.

Massive fires have also raged for more than 10 days in neighboring Turkey, where firefighters were still trying to extinguish blazes in five locations in the coastal province of Mugla, in the country's southwest.

"The situation is improving," Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli said late on Sunday. "It is too soon to say the fires are under control, but we are reaching that point."

On Evia overnight, residents and firefighters managed to save most of the village of Pefki, on the island's northern tip, where fast-moving flames entered the outskirts Saturday evening and destroyed at least one home.

A ferry that had been sent to Pefki to potentially evacuate people by sea turned into a temporary shelter

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 27 of 68

for those residents of that and other nearby villages who didn't have the means to flee toward north Evia's main harbor of Aidipsos, or who wanted to remain near their homes so they could return and check on them whenever it was safe to do so.

Monday morning found dozens of local residents, many with their pets, sleeping on chairs on the ferry, or on the lounge chairs of Pefki's pebble beach. Most of the surrounding villages had been left without power and running water due to the fire.

## Fire-friendly weather to return to Northern California

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER and JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

Thick smoke that held down winds and temperatures began to clear Sunday from the scenic forestlands of Northern California as firefighters battling the largest single wildfire in state history braced for a return of fire-friendly weather.

The winds weren't expected to reach the ferocious speeds that helped the Dixie Fire explode in size last week. But they were nonetheless concerning for firefighters working in unprecedented conditions to protect thousands of threatened homes.

"The live trees that are out there now have a lower fuel moisture than you would find when you go to a hardware store or a lumber yard and get that piece of lumber that's kiln dried," Mark Brunton, operations section chief for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, said in an online briefing Sunday morning. "It's that dry, so it doesn't take much for any sort of embers, sparks or small flaming front to get that going."

Fueled by strong winds and bone-dry vegetation, the fire incinerated much of Greenville on Wednesday and Thursday, destroying 370 homes and structures and threatening nearly 14,000 buildings in the northern Sierra Nevada.

The Dixie Fire, named for the road where it started nearly four weeks ago, grew to an area of 765 square miles (1,980 square kilometers) by Sunday evening and was just 21% contained, according to CalFire. It had scorched an area more than twice the size of New York City.

With smoke clearing out on eastern portions of the fire, crews that had been directly attacking the front lines would be forced to retreat and build containment lines farther back, said Dan McKeague, a fire information officer from the U.S. Forest Service. On the plus side, better visibility should allow planes and helicopters to return to the firefight and make it safer for ground crews to maneuver.

"As soon as that air clears, we can fly again," McKeague said.

Crews have constructed 465 miles (748 kilometers) of line around the massive blaze, Deputy Incident Commander Chris Waters said. That's about the distance from the central California city of Chico to Los Angeles. But officials are only confident that about 20% of the line is secure, he said.

"Every bit of that line needs to be constructed, staffed, mopped up and actually put to bed before we can call this fire fully contained," Waters said during Saturday evening's incident briefing.

Strong winds contributed to increased fire activity Sunday. But the weather was expected to settle a bit starting Monday.

Damage reports are preliminary because assessment teams can't get into many areas, officials said.

The blaze became the largest single fire in California's recorded history, surpassing last year's Creek Fire in the Central Valley. It's about half the size of the August Complex, a series of lightning-caused 2020 fires across seven counties that were fought together and that state officials consider California's largest wildfire overall.

The fire's cause was under investigation. The Pacific Gas & Electric utility has said it may have been sparked when a tree fell on one of its power lines. A federal judge ordered PG&E on Friday to give details by Aug. 16 about the equipment and vegetation where the fire started.

Cooler temperatures and higher humidity slowed the spread of the fire, and temperatures topped 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) instead of the triple-digit highs recorded earlier in the week.

But the blaze and its neighboring fires, within several hundred miles of each other, posed an ongoing

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 28 of 68

threat.

Gov. Gavin Newsom surveyed the damage in Greenville Saturday, writing on Twitter that "our hearts ache for this town."

"These are climate-induced wildfires and we have to acknowledge that we have the capacity in not just the state but in this country to solve this," Newsom said on CNN.

Heat waves and historic drought tied to climate change have made wildfires harder to fight in the American West. Scientists have said climate change has made the region much warmer and drier in the past 30 years and will continue to make the weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive.

Northwest of the Dixie Fire in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, hundreds of homes remained threatened by the McFarland and Monument fires, which continued growing. About a quarter of the McFarland Fire was contained and about 3% of the Monument Fire was contained.

South of the Dixie Fire, firefighters prevented further growth of the River Fire, which broke out Wednesday near Colfax and destroyed 68 homes.

Smoke from wildfires burning in the U.S. West continues to flow into parts of Colorado and Utah, where the air quality in many areas was rated as unhealthy. Denver's air quality Sunday was relatively better than Saturday, but the smoke has made the air there and in Salt Lake City among the worst in the world.

California's fire season is on track to surpass last year's season, which was the worst fire season in recent recorded state history.

Since the start of the year, more than 6,000 blazes have destroyed more than 1,260 square miles (3,260 square kilometers) of land — more than triple the losses for the same period in 2020, according to state fire figures.

California's raging wildfires were among 107 large fires burning across 14 states, mostly in the West, where historic drought conditions have left lands parched and ripe for ignition.

## Virginia contends with Confederate names on side streets

By MATTHEW BARAKAT Associated Press

McLEAN, Va. (AP) — It came as a surprise to Mottrom Drive resident Beau Fitzpatrick that he lives on a street named for a Confederate soldier.

"Really? I always assumed it was named for an apple, or apple juice," he said, referring to the Mott's brand of apple products.

In fact the street in McLean, Virginia, not far from the nation's capital, is named for Mottrom Dulany Ball, a captain in the Fairfax cavalry who was among the first Confederate officers taken prisoner in the Civil War. He became a Republican after the war and later a founding father of Alaska.

Mottrom Drive is among scores of side streets identified last year by a Fairfax County commission tasked with ferreting out forgotten names of the Confederacy. Northern Virginia, which saw some of the biggest battles of the Civil War and for decades was an indisputable part of the South, is now one of the wealthiest regions in the country with waning ties to its Southern roots.

As such, it has been swifter than other spots in the South to rid itself of Confederate names and memorials that dominated the region. A database maintained by the Southern Poverty Law Center shows nearly 2,300 roads, schools and monuments linked to the Confederacy spread across 23 states. In recent years, fewer than 400 have been removed or renamed.

In northern Virginia, the trend began in 2017, several years before the most recent wave of name changes. Fairfax County's former J.E.B. Stuart High School — named after the Confederate general — is now called Justice High.

Fairfax and Loudoun counties are also continuing to pursue changes for names of major highways running through their territory. In Fairfax, the effort is focused on Lee Highway and on Lee-Jackson Highway, which are named for generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. Loudoun County solicited the public for new names for John Mosby Highway, named for a Confederate cavalry commander who conducted raids throughout northern Virginia, as well as Harry Byrd Highway, named after a 20th century politician

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 29 of 68

who led the state's massive resistance campaign against federal demands to desegregate public schools.

But the counties are taking a different approach to the many side streets in the region that also carry Confederate names, both well known and long forgotten.

Fairfax is leaving it up to residents to seek a name change on those streets identified by its history commission. So far, not a single street has come forward with a petition to do so.

Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, said he doesn't see the inaction as an endorsement of the Confederacy.

"We've raised awareness about where these streets are, and we're leaving it up to the petition process" to allow those who are motivated to press for a change, he said.

He said he suspects a majority of county residents oppose naming streets for members of the Confederacy, but that doesn't necessarily translate into wanting to change your own street name. He acknowledged it's a hassle to do so, requiring changing the plats on file with the county and a whole host of address-change notifications a resident must make to all the banks, businesses and utilities with whom they conduct their daily affairs.

Neighboring Loudoun County, meanwhile, is not leaving the decision up to its residents. County staffers in Loudoun identified a smaller number of side streets, fewer than a dozen, that are linked to the Confederacy.

A formal vote on whether to change the names is scheduled for September, but at a meeting this month, a majority of board members made it clear they intend to change all of the names. Indeed, they sent county staff back to find out how much it would cost to do even deeper research to identify even more streets that might possibly carry a Confederate or segregationist connection that has thus far gone undetected.

Koran Saines, a county supervisor who supports the name changes, said the issue is a simple one.

"You're a part of the Confederacy, you should not be recognized with the honor of a street name. I'm sorry to tell you that. If the Confederacy had their way, three of us would not be sitting here," said Saines, one of three African Americans on the board of supervisors, at a July 6 meeting.

On Early Avenue in western Loudoun County, longtime resident Bertie Jones is unhappy with the change.

"I think it's a crock of bull," said Jones, who has lived on the street since 1965.

Jones said she knows that her street is named for Confederate Gen. Jubal Early, who led a campaign through Union territory in 1864, demanding ransoms from towns to avoid setting them ablaze and menacing the nation's capital. But she's not particularly bothered by it.

"Does this mean that everyone with the last name Early is going to have to change their name? It just makes more division than anything," she said.

And back in Fairfax County, Fitzpatrick said he doesn't see a need to rename Mottrom Drive. He said he understands the rationale for changing major highways named for prominent Confederate figures, but doesn't see the point in erasing an already forgotten figure from a rarely traveled side street.

"I feel like there's a middle ground," he said.

## China's wandering elephants may finally be heading home

BEIJING (AP) — An elephant herd that fascinated locals and people around the world by making a year-long journey into urbanized southwest China, raiding farms and even a retirement home for food, appears finally to be headed home.

Local authorities have deployed trucks, workers and drones to monitor the elephants, evacuated roads for them to pass safely and used food to steer them away from populated areas. Despite their entrance into villages and a close approach to the Yunnan provincial capital of Kunming, no animals or humans have been injured.

The 14 Asian elephants of various sizes and ages were guided across the Yuanjiang river in Yunnan on Sunday night and a path is being opened for them to return to the nature reserve where they lived in the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture.

The elephants left the reserve more than a year ago for unknown reasons and roamed more than 500

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 30 of 68

kilometers (300 miles) north. After reaching the outskirts of Kunming, a center for business and tourism, they turned south again, but still are far from the reserve.

One male that separated from the herd was subsequently tranquilized and returned to the reserve.

Asian elephants are among the most highly protected animals in China and their population has grown to around 300, even while their habitat has shrunk because of expanded farming and urban growth.

As of Sunday night, the herd was still in Yuanjiang County, approximately 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the reserve.

However, the National Forestry and Grassland Administration said the animals were in a "suitable habitat" after crossing the river.

A notice issued by provincial government said the herd's progress was significant and it would continue to work on getting the elephants back in their natural habitat soon.

## Cuomo's top aide resigns as governor faces harassment furor

By MARINA VILLENEUVE Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Melissa DeRosa, a fixture next to Gov. Andrew Cuomo for months during his coronavirus news conferences, resigned late Sunday on the heels of a report that found Cuomo sexually harassed 11 women, leaving the governor without his top aide as he faces the prospect of impeachment.

DeRosa, who had been one of Cuomo's most fierce defenders and strategists, said in a statement sent to multiple new organizations that serving the people of New York had been "the greatest honor of my life."

But she added that "Personally, the past two years have been emotionally and mentally trying."

She didn't give a more specific reason for her resignation.

"I am forever grateful for the opportunity to have worked with such talented and committed colleagues on behalf of our state," she said.

DeRosa's departure comes as Cuomo has dug in for the fight of his political life despite the threat of criminal investigations and widespread calls for his impeachment.

Scores of Democrats, including President Joe Biden, have urged him to leave office or face an impeachment battle he probably cannot win.

About two-thirds of state Assembly members have already said they favor an impeachment trial if he refuses to resign. Nearly all 63 members of the state Senate have called for Cuomo to step down or be removed.

More punishing news for the governor is expected Monday when an Assembly committee meets to discuss possible impeachment proceedings and "CBS This Morning" is scheduled to broadcast the first TV interview from an executive assistant who accused Cuomo of groping her breast.

In her first public interview in which she identified herself, Brittany Commisso told CBS and the Times-Union newspaper, of Albany, that what Cuomo did was a crime and that he "needs to be held accountable."

Commisso has said Cuomo reached under her shirt and fondled her when they were alone in a room at the Executive Mansion last year and on another occasion rubbed her rear end while they posed for a photo. She was the first woman to file a criminal complaint against Cuomo.

"He broke the law," she said in an excerpt of an interview scheduled to be aired in full on Monday.

The Associated Press does not identify alleged victims of sexual misconduct unless they speak out publicly, as Commisso has done.

Cuomo, who has denied touching any women inappropriately, has largely been holed up in the governor's mansion since the release of a 168-page report written by two independent attorneys selected by the state attorney general to investigate his behavior.

His lawyers have attacked the credibility and motives of his accusers.

DeRosa, who often defended Cuomo when he faced public criticism, had been with the administration since 2013. She got the title "secretary to the governor" in 2017, and was probably the most recognizable face in the administration after Cuomo.

She appeared by his side in most of his news briefings and often fielded policy questions from reporters

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 31 of 68

when the governor didn't know enough details to answer.

DeRosa was mentioned 187 times in the attorney general's report, which detailed the administration's efforts to discredit some of his accusers.

The report described DeRosa as a central figure in his office's retaliation against one of the women, Lindsey Boylan, after she became the first person to speak out publicly. The administration released internal memos showing that Boylan had, herself, been the subject of complaints about toxic workplace behavior.

The investigators' report also revealed some tension between DeRosa and Cuomo: She told investigators she was so upset with the way Cuomo had handled a conversation with one of his accusers, former aide Charlotte Bennett, that she angrily got out of his car when it stopped at a traffic light.

"She told the governor, 'I can't believe that this happened. I can't believe you put yourself in a situation where you would be having any version of this conversation,'" the report said.

The governor's lawyers have promised what will likely be a drawn-out fight to stay in office, and few see him as willing to quit.

"My sense is from what I'm hearing is he's still looking for ways to fight this and get his side of the story out," state Democratic party Chairman Jay Jacobs said in an interview with The AP. But Jacobs added: "I just think that he's going to, at some point, see that the political support is just not anywhere near enough to even make an attempt worthwhile."

Cuomo lawyer, Rita Glavin, told CNN on Saturday that he had no plans to resign.

She called the attorney general's report "shoddy" and "biased" and "an ambush."

Dozens of state lawmakers who were once hesitant to call for Cuomo's resignation or impeachment told the AP in recent interviews that they were swayed by the heft of the report.

"I think the majority of us feel that the governor is not in a position to lead the state any longer, and that's not a temporary position," said Assembly member John McDonald, a Democrat whose district includes Albany.

The state Assembly's judiciary committee planned to meet Monday to discuss when to conclude its monthslong investigation into whether there are grounds to impeach Cuomo.

The investigation has focused on sexual harassment and misconduct, the administration's past refusal to release how many nursing home residents died of COVID-19, the use of state resources for Cuomo's \$5 million book deal and efforts to prioritize COVID-19 tests for the governor's inner circle in spring 2020, when testing was scarce.

Some lawmakers want an impeachment vote in days, but committee members say the probe could wrap up in a month. State law requires at least 30 days between an Assembly impeachment vote and Senate impeachment trial.

Assembly member Amanda Septimo called for urgency, saying Cuomo was damaging the Democratic Party nationally.

"I'm willing to put money on how soon we see Cuomo's face on an attack mailer somewhere in Ohio," she said.

Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul would take over for Cuomo if a majority of the 150-member Assembly votes to impeach him.

Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple said Saturday that Cuomo could face misdemeanor charges if investigators substantiate Commisso's complaint. At least five district attorneys have asked for materials from the attorney general's inquiry to see if any of the allegations could result in criminal charges.

## Nagasaki marks 76th anniversary of atomic bombing

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Nagasaki on Monday marked the 76th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of the Japanese city with its mayor urging Japan, the United States and Russia to do more to eliminate nuclear weapons.

In his speech at the Nagasaki Peace Park, Mayor Tomihisa Taue urged Japan's government to take the

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 32 of 68

lead in creating a nuclear-free zone in Northeast Asia rather than staying under the U.S. nuclear umbrella — a reference to the U.S. promise to use its own nuclear weapons to defend allies without them.

Taue also singled out the United States and Russia — which have the biggest arsenals by far — to do more for nuclear disarmament, as he raised concern that nuclear states have backtracked from disarmament efforts and are upgrading and miniaturizing nuclear weapons.

“Please look into building a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Northeast Asia that would create a ‘non-nuclear umbrella’ instead of a ‘nuclear umbrella’ and be a step in the direction of a world free of nuclear weapons,” Taue said as he urged Japan’s government to do more to take action for nuclear disarmament.

At 11:02 a.m., the moment the B-29 bomber dropped a plutonium bomb, Nagasaki survivors and other participants in the ceremony stood in a minute of silence to honor more than 70,000 lives lost.

The Aug. 9, 1945, bombing came three days after the United States made the world’s first atomic attack on Hiroshima, killing 140,000. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, ending World War II.

The mayor also called Japan’s government and lawmakers to quickly sign the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that took effect in January.

Tokyo renounces its own possession, production or hosting of nuclear weapons, but as a U.S. ally Japan hosts 50,000 American troops and is protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The post-WWII security arrangement complicates the push to get Japan to sign the treaty as it beefs up its own military while stepping up defense cooperation with other nuclear-weapons states such as Britain and France, to deal with threats from North Korea and China, among others.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said the security environment is severe and that global views are deeply divided over nuclear disarmament, and that it is necessary to remove distrust by promoting dialogue and form a mutual ground for discussion.

Taue also called for a substantial progress toward nuclear disarmament made at next year’s Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty conference, “starting with greater steps by the U.S. and Russia to reduce nuclear weapons.”

He asked Suga’s government to step up and speed up medical and welfare support for the aging atomic bombing survivors, or hibakusha, whose average age is now over 83 years.

## Canada begins allowing vaccinated US citizens to visit again

By LISA BAUMANN and WILSON RING Associated Press

Canada on Monday is lifting its prohibition on Americans crossing the border to shop, vacation or visit, but the United States is keeping similar restrictions in place for Canadians, part of a bumpy return to normalcy from COVID-19 travel bans.

U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents must be both fully vaccinated and test negative for COVID-19 within three days to get across one of the world’s longest and busiest land borders. Travelers also must fill out a detailed on application on the arriveCAN app before crossing.

Even though travelers have to register, the Canada Border Services Agency won’t say how many people they are expecting to enter Canada for the reopening. But travelers should plan for the possibility of additional processing time at the border.

“CBSA will not compromise the health and safety of Canadians for the sake of border wait times,” agency spokeswoman Rebecca Purdy said in a statement.

While the Canada Border Services Agency won’t say how many people it’s expecting, Garnet Health, an Essex, Vermont-based company that offers same-day COVID-19 testing, has seen the number of tests it performs more than triple in recent weeks. The increase coincides with Canada’s decision last month to drop a two-week quarantine requirement for its citizens when they return home from the U.S.

“I imagine once that border opens, we are going to see lots of people,” said Chelsea Sweeney, the company’s director of business development.

The U.S.-Canada border has been closed to nonessential travel since March 2020 to try to slow the spread of the coronavirus.



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 33 of 68

The U.S. has said it will extend its closure to all Canadians making nonessential trips until at least Aug. 21, which also applies to the Mexican border. But the Biden administration is beginning to make plans for a phased reopening. The main requirement would be that nearly all foreign visitors to the U.S. will have to be vaccinated against the coronavirus.

But Canadians aren't waiting for reciprocal rules.

Joel Villanueva, owner of Primo's Mexican Grill in White Rock, British Columbia, about 2.5 miles (4 kilometers) north of the U.S. border, is more than ready for Americans to return.

"Let's get this thing going," he said. "A lot of our customers are from the United States, and we are literally minutes from across the border. We welcome our Americans, and we depend on their foot traffic."

Villanueva said he supports people coming who are fully vaccinated and doesn't think there will be a rush of Americans initially. But if his restaurant and dozens of others along the waterfront could fill some tables with U.S. visitors every day for the rest of the summer, it would be a big financial boost, he said.

Near the border in Washington state, Blaine Chamber of Commerce board member Carroll Solomon called the reopening a step in the right direction for businesses. But she also said it was somewhat concerning because of an increase in COVID-19 cases nationwide as the highly contagious delta variant spreads.

"For people who need to get up there (to Canada) for family reasons, it's wonderful," said Solomon, who also volunteers at the Blaine Visitor Information Center.

With all the hoops people need to jump through — being fully vaccinated, getting tested for COVID-19 and uploading that information to an app — she doesn't think that people will be going to Canada for many day trips.

"I have a lot of friends on the Canadian side and would love to go have lunch with somebody, but you can't just do that; you have to plan days in advance to make sure you can get through," Solomon said.

It's going to be an event for the Blaine area when Canadians can come down on a regular basis, she said.

As far as returning to the United States from Canada, U.S. Customs and Border Protection spokesman Jason Givens said there's no requirement to show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test.

"CBP officers have been processing essential travel throughout the pandemic and remain ready and able to process American citizens and permanent residents returning from Canada," Givens said by email.

Steve Blake, who lives in Stanstead, Quebec, just across the border from Derby Line, Vermont, is hoping his siblings living in the United States will be able to visit Canada soon so they can hold a memorial service for their mother who died in early 2020, just before the pandemic closed the border. But given the requirements, he doesn't know how quickly that will happen.

"I'd like it to be sooner rather than later," he said.

## Senators on left, right hold together to push infrastructure

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Often elusive, the political center is holding steady in the Senate as a coalition of Democratic and Republican senators brushes off critics to push the \$1 trillion infrastructure package toward final passage.

On the left, the Democrats have withstood the complaints of liberals who say the proposal falls short of what's needed to provide a down payment on one of President Joe Biden's top priorities.

From the right, the Republicans are largely ignoring the criticism from their most conservative and far-flung voices, including a barrage of name-calling from former President Donald Trump as he tries to derail the package.

All told, some 70 senators appear poised to carry the bipartisan infrastructure bill to passage, a potentially robust tally of lawmakers eager to tap the billions in new spending it will unleash for public works projects back home.

"This is something that brings this country together," said Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, a lead negotiator. "We need the investment, let's be honest."

Senators hoisted the package over another hurdle late Sunday, easily clearing a remaining 60-vote

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 34 of 68

threshold on a vote of 68-29, despite a few holdouts trying to run out the clock on debate and drag final passage to Tuesday. The measure would then go to the House.

"A very handsome, overwhelming vote," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

The rare bipartisan momentum reflects a political power center that has sprung from the middle of the aisle in the narrowly split Congress. For weeks, senators have negotiated and shaped the package, overcoming partisan gridlock for a compromise with the Biden White House. A bipartisan group of House lawmakers has pledged its own support.

Backed by Biden and a sizable coalition of business, farm, labor and public interest groups, the package is one of the biggest investments of its kind in years. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act seeks to inject nearly \$550 billion in new spending on roads, bridges, broadband internet, water pipes and other public works systems undergirding the nation. Some 20 Republican senators are poised to join Democrats in supporting support it.

"Look at the players," said Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C. "These are not the fringes of both parties."

Once voting wraps up, senators immediately will turn to the budget outline for a \$3.5 trillion package of child care, elder care and other programs that is a much more partisan undertaking and expected to draw only Democratic support.

Despite the momentum, action ground to a halt over the weekend when Sen. Bill Hagerty, a Tennessee Republican allied with Trump, refused to speed up the process.

Hagerty, who had been Trump's ambassador to Japan, argued for taking as much time as needed for debate and amendments, in part because he wants to slow the march toward Biden's \$3.5 trillion bill aimed at so-called soft infrastructure.

Trump called Hagerty on Sunday morning, said a person familiar with the call who requested anonymity to discuss it. Hagerty said later Sunday he was trying to prevent a "socialist debt bomb" of new government spending.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has so far allowed the bill to progress, calling the bill "a compromise."

Senators have spent the past week processing nearly two dozen amendments to the 2,700-page package, but so far none has substantially changed its framework.

More amendments have been offered on cryptocurrency, defense-related infrastructure and to allow states to repurpose a portion of their untapped federal COVID-19 relief aid for infrastructure. But it's unclear if they will be considered for votes.

Senators have found much to like in the bill, even though it does not fully satisfy liberals, who view it as too small, or conservatives, who find it too large.

An analysis of the bill from the Congressional Budget Office drew concerns, particularly from Republicans after concluding the legislation would increase deficits by about \$256 billion over the next decade.

Unlike Biden's bigger \$3.5 trillion package, which would be paid for by higher tax rates for corporations and the wealthy, the bipartisan package is funded by repurposing other money, and other spending cuts and revenue streams. The bill's backers argued that the budget office was unable to take into account certain revenue streams — including from future economic growth.

The House is expected to consider both Biden infrastructure packages when it returns from recess in September.

## Paris calling: After Tokyo, Olympians hanker for 2024 Games

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — They'll always have Paris.

That thought, full of promise, has been a lifebuoy for athletes to cling to as they coped, as best they could, with thickets of restrictions at the pandemic-hit Tokyo Games that severely crimped their Olympic experience — and left some hungry for more.

Barred from bringing family and friends with them to Japan, playing in empty arenas and not allowed

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 35 of 68

to sightsee in Tokyo, some athletes found themselves day-dreaming about the French capital's Olympic rendezvous in 2024. If the coronavirus is tamed by then, the Paris Games could quickly become the party games. Already, there is palpable pent-up eagerness among athletes to make up for Tokyo and its disappointments.

"When Paris happens, I'll be like, 'OK, wow, like this is a whole new energy. This is it,'" said U.S. skateboarder Mariah Duran. "Maybe I had to have the appetizer before the whole meal."

For now, Paris officials say they're betting that the pandemic will be over when their turn comes. "Normally, we'll be able to party," the city's mayor, Anne Hidalgo, said Sunday on French TV when Tokyo passed the baton.

But if the coronavirus is still ruining the best-laid plans, then Tokyo has served up a model of how to hold an Olympics even as infections are surging. It pared the games down to their most essential ingredient: competition. No spectators. No city-wide partying. Very little mingling between Olympians and their hosts. Paris officials were watching closely and say that while they hope for the best, they'll also plan for the worst.

Toughest for many Tokyo Olympians was not being accompanied to Japan by loved ones who had no choice but to watch them compete on TV. American surfer Carissa Moore said it was "a huge challenge" being separated from her husband and his "strong constant voice."

Moore ultimately found her footing to win gold in surfing's debut as an Olympic sport. As painful as separation was, Tokyo was also a learning experience for the Hawaiian. "I'm very proud of myself, to be here and stand on my own two feet," she said.

Traveling without her parents for the first time at age 17, U.S. skateboarder Brighton Zeuner compensated by staying closely connected even during her competition, video-calling her father from the Olympic skate bowl "between every single run I did."

To limit infection risks, organizers also asked athletes to arrive in Tokyo no earlier than five days before competing and leave within 48 hours of being done — a rapid turnaround that further truncated the Olympic experience.

Belgian skateboarder Axel Cruysberghs, who competed in week one, and his skateboarding wife Lizzie Armanto, who competed in week two, passed each other like ships in the night. As she took off for Tokyo, his flight back to their home was 20 minutes from landing.

"It worked out for our puppy," she joked. But it wasn't the fairy-tale Olympics they'd planned before the pandemic.

"We'd hoped to like be here for a month together and, you know, I could see his event and he could stay for mine," Armanto said. "But because of COVID and everything ... "

Armanto came away from Tokyo having not made up her mind about whether she wants to go again in Paris. In an Instagram livestream from the Olympic residential compound where athletes were largely confined when not training or competing, she was wrestling with cabin fever, complaining of rooms that "feel a little prison-like" and wishing that organizers hadn't barred athletes from going to watch sports other than their own in their downtime.

"I've circled the perimeter quite a few times because what else do you do here?" Armanto asked.

Not being able to pass the time at sports venues was a common complaint.

"That's something I would have liked to have experienced as an Olympian, to go watch my other teammates, other than wrestlers, compete," said Elias Kuosmanen of Finland, who wrestled in the Greco-Roman heavyweight class.

At the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Canadian volleyball player Nicholas Hoag took in gymnastics and track and field on off days, went out for drinks with teammates and otherwise absorbed the Olympic experience. But on days with no matches in Tokyo, "I was watching TV pretty much all day, watching all the sports."

Another Canadian volleyballer, Ryan Sclater, said the pandemic games were "a real mix of amazing things and weird things" and somewhat blunted by social distancing and mask wearing. Athletes were asked not

to mingle outside their teams and avoid "unnecessary" hugs, high-fives and handshakes — guidance they frequently ignored in the heat and joy of competition.

"We are not quite connecting in the same way that we normally could," Sclater said. "It's funny being so close to all these amazing people who are here to compete but then not quite getting to know them in the same way as you might at a different Olympics."

But because the pandemic delayed Tokyo by a year, Paris is now only a three-year wait instead of the usual four.

"That is exciting, yes, to think about being able to do this again," Sclater said. "To see even more of the beauty and coolness of people coming together and being able to really connect to the Olympics."

## Senators push infrastructure bill a step closer to passage

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senators hoisted the \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure package over another hurdle late Sunday, a coalition of Democrats and Republicans pushing it closer to passage despite a few holdouts trying to derail one of President Joe Biden's top priorities.

The rare bipartisan momentum was holding steady, a reflection of the bill's popularity and the eagerness of senators to show voters back home they can deliver. One of the biggest investments of its kind in years, the package promises to unleash billions of dollars to upgrade roads, bridges, broadband internet, water pipes and other public works systems undergirding the nation.

Senators easily overcame another 60-vote hurdle on a vote of 68-29. Final votes could drag into early Tuesday as a single GOP senator, Tennessee's Bill Hagerty, refused to relent on the mandatory debate time.

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., stressed to colleagues that they could proceed the "easy way or the hard way," as the Senate slogged through its second consecutive weekend session.

"We'll keep proceeding until we get this bill done," Schumer said.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act would provide what Biden has called a "historic investment" in public works programs, the first part of the president's his rebuilding agenda. As many as 20 Republicans are expected to join Democrats in the evenly split Senate for what would be a robust final tally. If approved, it would go to the House.

"We're on the cusp of seeing that move through the Senate," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said on "Fox News Sunday," citing "a remarkable coalition" that includes business, labor and lawmakers from both parties. "I think we're about to get this done."

Once voting wraps up, senators immediately will turn to the budget outline for a \$3.5 trillion package of child care, elder care and other programs that is a much more partisan undertaking and expected to draw only Democratic support.

Despite the momentum, action ground to a halt over the weekend when Hagerty, an ally of Donald Trump, forced the Senate to run out the clock on debate time, refusing to consent to speeding up the process.

Hagerty, who had been Trump's ambassador to Japan, was leading the effort to take as much time as needed to debate and amend the bipartisan bill, in part because he wants to slow the march toward Biden's next big bill, which plans \$3.5 trillion for child care, an expansion of Medicare for seniors and other so-called soft infrastructure needs.

Trump called Hagerty on Sunday morning, said a person familiar with the call who requested anonymity to discuss it. Hagerty said later Sunday in a speech on the Senate floor that he was trying to prevent a "socialist debt bomb" of new government spending.

The former president has been publicly critical of the bipartisan bill and criticizing Biden and the senators from both parties who support it, though it's unclear whether Trump's broadsides will have much sway with Republican senators. He celebrated Hagerty's stand in a statement Sunday.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has so far allowed the bill to progress, despite the name-calling and criticism coming his way from Trump. "This is a compromise," McConnell said.

As the weekend standoff dragged on, Republicans who helped negotiate the compromise spoke up Sun-

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 37 of 68

day commending the former president for having sparked infrastructure talks when he was in the White House even if those bills never panned out.

Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, the lead Republican negotiator, said it's time overdue to improve the nation's public works systems.

"The American people deserve to have good roads and bridges and infrastructure to drive on, travel on," he said.

Another negotiator, Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, acknowledged that no compromise is perfect, but doing nothing when there was a bill before them was not an option.

"Every president in the modern era has proposed an infrastructure package," he said. "This was an effort to say let's break the logjam."

Biden, who was spending the weekend in Delaware, said the bipartisan package offers an investment on par with the building of the transcontinental railroad or interstate highway system.

Senators have spent the past week processing nearly two dozen amendments to the 2,700-page package, but so far none has substantially changed its framework.

More amendments have been offered as senators seek to revise a section on cryptocurrency, a long-shot effort by defense hawks to add \$50 billion for defense-related infrastructure and a bipartisan amendment to repurpose a portion of the untapped COVID-19 relief aid that had been sent to the states. But it's unclear if they will be considered for votes.

Senators have found much to like in the bill, even though it does not fully satisfy liberals, who view it as too small, or conservatives, who find it too large. It would provide federal money for projects many states and cities could not afford on their own.

An analysis of the bill from the Congressional Budget Office drew concerns, particularly from Republicans. It concluded that the legislation would increase deficits by about \$256 billion over the next decade.

But the bill's backers argued that the budget office was unable to take into account certain revenue streams — including from future economic growth. Additional analysis released Saturday by the budget office suggested infrastructure spending overall could boost productivity and lower the ultimate costs.

Paying for the package has been a pressure point throughout the months of negotiations after Democrats objected to an increase in the gas tax paid at the pump and Republicans resisted a plan to bolster the IRS to go after tax scofflaws.

Unlike Biden's bigger \$3.5 trillion package, which would be paid for by higher tax rates for corporations and the wealthy, the bipartisan package is funded by repurposing other money, including untapped COVID-19 aid, and other spending cuts and revenue streams.

The House is in recess and is expected to consider both Biden infrastructure packages when it returns in September.

## 1 Chicago officer killed, 1 wounded in traffic stop shooting

CHICAGO (AP) — A 29-year-old female police officer in Chicago was killed and another officer was seriously wounded in an exchange of gunfire during a traffic stop, officials said Sunday, the city's mayor later citing the shooting as a reason for Chicagoans to work together to stem violence.

The officer killed Saturday night was identified as Ella French, according to a post on the Chicago Police Department's Facebook page Sunday evening. French's death was the first fatal shooting of a Chicago officer in the line of duty since 2018 and the first female officer fatally shot on the job in 33 years.

"We will never forget the true bravery she exemplified as she laid her life down to protect others," the department said of French on Facebook, adding that fellow officers will "grieve the loss of this hero." The department also requested support for French's "wounded partner, who is in the hospital fighting for his life."

At a Sunday news conference, Mayor Lori Lightfoot urged Chicagoans to end the acrimony between ardent police proponents who say officers are hampered by overly burdensome rules and staunch critics who say officers act with impunity.

"Stop. Just stop," she said. "This constant strife is not what we need in this moment."

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 38 of 68

The shooting of the officers occurred on another violent summer weekend in the nation's third largest city, with at least 64 people shot, 10 fatally, by afternoon Sunday, ABC7 in Chicago reported.

"The police are not our enemies," Lightfoot added at the news conference. "We must come together... We have a common enemy: It's the guns and the gangs."

Officers had stopped a vehicle with two men and a woman inside just after 9 p.m. on Chicago's South Side, when a male passenger opened fire, Chicago Police Superintendent David Brown said during the same news conference.

Officers returned fire, striking the passenger who appeared to fire at them, said Brown. He did not release the condition of that man. All three are in custody, but no charges had been filed, he said.

Police also did not identify the three who have been arrested.

When asked about the condition of the injured officer, Brown responded, "Critical. We need your prayers."

The superintendent said it was too soon to say why the vehicle was stopped and what might have happened just before the shooting began. He said available evidence included police body camera footage. A gun was also recovered at the scene.

A large crowd of officers gathered outside the hospital's ambulance entrance overnight, some hugging and praying, as Lightfoot first addressed the shooting to reporters nearby. Lightfoot said the officer who died "was very young on the job, but incredibly enthusiastic to do the work."

The last Chicago officer shot to death in the line of duty was 28-year-old Samuel Jimenez, who was killed after responding to a shooting at a hospital on Nov. 19, 2018.

Two officers, Conrad Gary and Eduardo Marmolejo, died when they were struck by a train while pursuing a suspect on Dec. 17, 2018. The department also considers the COVID-19 deaths of four officers last year line-of-duty deaths.

The last female officer shot to death in the line of duty was Irma Ruiz, who was shot inside an elementary school in 1988.

## Free shots at South Beach nightclub - vaccine shots, that is

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Ready to party at one of South Beach's most glamorous nightclubs? Then roll up your sleeves because these shots won't get you buzzed. LIV is offering free COVID-19 vaccines outside the Miami club where high rollers spend up to \$20,000 just for a table.

The start-studded nightclub, where Super Bowl champs celebrate at parties so legendary they've inspired lyrics from Drake and Kanye West, set up pop-up COVID vaccine sites over the weekend at LIV and club Story to entice the young demographic that is rapidly filling up Florida hospitals as the delta variant rapidly spreads across Florida.

The Sunshine State set another record high over the weekend. On Saturday, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 23,903 new COVID-19 cases for Friday. That tops the previous day's record of 22,783 new cases.

Clubs LIV and Story were shuttered for roughly a year during the pandemic and reopened back in April. Owner David Grutman, the king of South Beach's night life scene, who also owns a restaurant and hotel with Pharrell, said, "We are excited, we want to stay open, and we know the only way to make that happen is if people get vaccinated, so we want to make it as accessible as possible."

He partnered with CDR Health, which has administered over 2 million vaccines since the outbreak, to offer free shots outside the clubs over the weekend, with the possibility of extending it for additional weekends.

Further north in West Palm Beach, Clematis Social club owner Cleve Mash is waiving door charges for fully vaccinated partiers and offering \$200 bonuses to workers who can prove their vaccine status, according to the Palm Beach Post.

The overwhelming majority of COVID-19 patients hospitalized in Florida are unvaccinated. Of the more than 10.5 million fully vaccinated Floridians, approximately 0.019% are in a Florida hospital with COVID-19, according to the Florida Hospital Association.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 39 of 68

Twenty-five year-old Elizabeth Bahamonde remembers the last time she partied with friends at LIV. It was just months before the pandemic and they danced the night away, "shoulder to shoulder" as Latin pop superstar Bad Bunny performed.

"The club scene in Miami is a lifestyle. If you live here you just know that," the Uber Eats driver told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Even though it was hard, she stayed home for most of the pandemic and didn't start going out again until the end of 2020, saying she was sick of the isolation. But as the clubs and restaurants across Florida grew more crowded and masks and other restrictions were lifted, she stopped clubbing.

She'd been on the fence about the vaccine and had planned to get it, but got COVID two weeks ago, calling it "the most horrible experience of my life."

"I wasn't anti-vax but I was waiting it out," said Bahamonde, who said half her friends are vaccinated and half are not. "As ignorant as it may seem, I had to go through it to want to do it."

Bahamonde said she's planning to get vaccinated now and thinks it's cool that LIV is using its influence to promote the vaccine to young clubgoers, saying her unvaccinated friends "are actually going out more."

"LIV is using their image and platform to spread that incentive that, 'Hey, it's cool to party, but it's also cool to be vaccinated.' I think it puts people in a more comfortable situation," she said.

Dr. Leonardo Alonso, an emergency room physician in Jacksonville where the outbreak is especially rampant, said he's seeing large numbers of healthy, young and middle-aged patients coming in with COVID pneumonia and alarmingly low oxygen readings.

"The variant is more virulent," he said. "I didn't see anywhere near the numbers of young people so hypoxic and sick last year," he said, noting many are requiring additional oxygen.

"And it's partly because this group of people disproportionately did not get vaccinated out of choice," he said.

Florida saw a rise of the seven-day average in new cases to 19,250 this Friday from 15,817 a week earlier. The state tallied 616 deaths in one week, raising the total COVID-19 death toll to 39,695, according to weekly statistic published late Friday by the Florida Department of Health.

Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis has encouraged vaccinations, yet repeatedly stressed he will not impose statewide mask mandates or business lockdowns, calling such restrictions harmful, destructive and ineffective.

## Fire devours Greek island's forests; residents urged to flee

By NICOLAE DUMITRACHE and ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

PEFKI, Greece (AP) — Pillars of billowing smoke and ash turned the sky orange and blocked out the sun above Greece's second-largest island Sunday as a days-old wildfire devoured pristine forests and encroached on villages, triggering more evacuation alerts.

The fire on Evia, an island of forested mountains and canyons laced with small coves of crystalline water, began Aug. 3 and cut across the popular summer destination from coast to coast as it burned out of control. Scores of homes and businesses have been destroyed and thousands of residents and tourists have fled, many escaping the flames via flotillas that even operated in the dark of night.

The blaze is the most severe of dozens that broke out in the wake of Greece's most protracted heat wave in three decades, which sent temperatures soaring to 45 degrees Celsius (113 F) for days, creating bone-dry conditions.

"It's already too late, the area has been destroyed," Giannis Kontzias, mayor of the northern Evia municipality of Istiaia, lamented on Greece's Open TV. He was one of several local officials and residents who took to Greek TV networks to appeal for more firefighting help, particularly from water-dropping planes and helicopters.

Evacuation orders were issued Sunday for four villages in northern Evia, including Pefki, but many residents refused to leave, hoping to save their properties.

In dramatic scenes Sunday afternoon, fast-moving flames had encroached on the seaside village of Pefki,

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 40 of 68

burning trees on the fringes and entering the houses' yards. Panicked residents raced with water tanks, hoses and branches in a seemingly futile effort to extinguish the flames.

Late Sunday, firefighters managed to stop the fire before it advanced further into Pefki, on the island's northern coast. Pefki residents and tourists fled to the port of Aidipsos to take the ferry to the mainland port of Arkitsa, 150 kilometers northwest of Athens.

Acrid, choking smoke hung in the orange-grey air, turning the day into an apocalyptic twilight as people headed towards Pefki's pebble beach, dragging suitcases, clutching pets and helping elderly relatives.

The ferry, carrying panicked, exhausted evacuees who had boarded the vessel before the advance of the fire was halted, arrived at Arkitsa on Sunday evening. Passengers complained they had been left to fend for themselves as the fire approached.

"We were completely forsaken. There were no fire brigades, there were no vehicles, nothing!" David Angelou told The Associated Press, adding that the villagers' hoses were inadequate to stop the fire.

Angelou described the frightening hours before the evacuation.

"You could feel the enormous heat, there was also a lot of smoke. You could see the sun, a red ball, and then, nothing else around," he said.

Angelou's complaint was echoed by others, who decried government efforts, citing what they saw as a lack of firefighting forces or planes or delays in their arrival.

"There was ash and smoke everywhere," said Christina Tsatou, who had been in the seaside village of Agios Georgios. "It is very sad that they did not send help in the first days and they left the island burning. It was unfair and many people have lost their property, their livelihoods."

In the picturesque mountain village of Gouves, towering flames leaped from the treetops, devouring the pine forest leading to the village. Some residents remained, dousing homes with water from garden hoses in a last-ditch effort to save them. Others used bulldozers to raze trees and bushes, hoping to create rudimentary firebreaks.

Civil Protection chief Nikos Hardalias said the Evia fire was burning on two fronts, one to the north and one to the south. He said the conditions there were particularly tough for the water-dropping planes and helicopters, whose pilots faced "great danger" with limited visibility and air turbulence.

"We have before us...one more difficult night," Hardalias said. "All the forces that have been fighting a difficult battle all these days will continue operating with unabated intensity, with the same self-sacrifice."

The wildfires have stretched Greece's firefighting capabilities to the limit, and the government has appealed for help from abroad. More than 20 countries in Europe and the Mideast have responded, sending planes, helicopters, vehicles and manpower.

The fire department said Sunday 575 firefighters, 35 ground teams and 89 vehicles were battling the Evia wildfire, including 112 Romanian and 100 Ukrainian firefighters. Four helicopters and three planes provided air support.

Three more major fires were also burning Sunday in Greece's southern Peloponnese region, while another broke out Sunday afternoon on the southern island of Crete.

Another massive fire that ravaged forests, homes and businesses on the northern fringes of the Greek capital appeared to be on the wane. That blaze burnt through large tracts of a national park on Mount Parnitha, the largest forested area remaining near Athens.

Firefighters were worried that the Mount Parnitha fire would rekindle, so they and the military had been patrolling all night, Hardalias said.

On Friday, a volunteer firefighter died after suffering head injuries from a falling electric pole north of Athens, while at least 20 people have been treated for fire-related injuries, including two firefighters hospitalized in intensive care.

The causes of the fires are under investigation. At least eight people have been arrested around Greece.

Greek and European officials have also blamed climate change for the large number of fires in southern Europe this summer, from Italy to the Balkans, Greece and Turkey.

Massive fires also have been burning across Siberia in northern Russia for weeks, forcing the evacua-



tion Saturday of a dozen villages. In all, wildfires have burned nearly 15 million acres this year in Russia. In the U.S., hot, dry, gusty weather has also fueled devastating wildfires in California.

## Hundreds in Warsaw protest political repression in Belarus

By RAFAL NIEDZIELSKI Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Hundreds of people, among them many Belarusians living in exile in Poland, marched Sunday in Warsaw to protest political repression in neighboring Belarus — a demonstration held on the eve of the one-year anniversary of the Belarus presidential election that they consider rigged.

Many carried the Belarusian opposition's red-and-white flag, which is banned in Belarus, and chanted "Long live Belarus!"

The protest focused on the Aug. 9, 2020 presidential election in Belarus in which President Alexander Lukashenko was awarded a sixth term in a vote that the opposition and many in the West view as fraudulent.

A belief that the vote was stolen triggered mass protests in Belarus that led to increased repressions by Lukashenko's regime on protesters, dissidents and independent media. Over 35,000 people were arrested and thousands were beaten and jailed.

The protesters began in central Warsaw and marched past the U.S. and Russian embassies, aiming for the Belarusian embassy in a southern Warsaw district.

Frantz Aslauski, a 56-years-old Belarusian who traveled from his new home in Wroclaw, Poland, said he believed Belarusians abroad must protest "because in Belarus people cannot go to the streets because they will be thrown into prison."

"We have the opportunity (to demonstrate), therefore this responsibility rests on us, we must shout at the whole world, so that the whole world supports us in our pursuit of freedom and democracy," Aslauski said.

In front of the Russian embassy, speakers accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of being responsible for the repressions in Belarus. One banner showed an image of Lukashenko depicted as a vampire, with blood dripping from his mouth.

Lukashenko has earned the nickname of "Europe's last dictator" in the West for his relentless repression of dissent since taking the helm in 1994. In one shocking case, the regime this year arrested a dissident journalist after forcing his flight to divert to Belarus.

The organizers of the Warsaw march said the event was held as a sign that Belarusians in Poland will not give up their fight to bring change to Belarus. Among their demands was the release of political prisoners back home.

Poland, along with Lithuania and Ukraine, has become a key center of life in exile for Belarusians who have fled their homeland. Many people in Poland, an ex-communist country now in the European Union which shares a border with Belarus, support the efforts of Belarusians seeking democratic change.

One of the most recent Belarusians to arrive is Krystsina Tsimanouskaya, an Olympic sprinter who, fearing reprisals at home, fled last week from the Tokyo Olympics to Poland.

Thousands of Belarusians have also fled to neighboring Ukraine, fearing persecution back home. In Ukraine's capital of Kyiv on Sunday, some 500 Belarusians also took to the streets to protest repression in Belarus and to mark the anniversary of the presidential election that triggered the largest and the most sustained wave of protests in Belarus' history.

The demonstrators carried red-and-white flags and banners saying "Belarus under Lukashenko has become a concentration camp," "North Korea in the center of Europe. Stop." They demanded that international authorities create a tribunal to investigate what they called Lukashenko's crimes.

"Every day Lukashenko is in power, there are more victims of political repressions, even in Ukraine," 21-year-old Bazhena Zholudz said at the rally.

Zholudz was the girlfriend of Vitaly Shishov, a Belarusian activist who ran a group in Ukraine helping Belarusians fleeing persecution. Shishov was found hanged in Kyiv last week and Ukrainian police are investigating whether it was a murder made to look like a suicide.

Following Shishov's death, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told the country's police and security

forces to study security risks for all Belarusians who have arrived in Ukraine over the past year.

"Every Belarusian who can be a target for criminals in connection with his public political position should receive special and reliable protection," Zelenskyy's office quoted him as saying.

## Markie Post, TV veteran actor of 'Night Court,' dies at 70

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Markie Post, who played the public defender in the 1980s sitcom "Night Court" and was a regular presence on television for four decades, has died. She was 70.

Post's manager, Ellen Lubin Sanitsky, said Post died Saturday in Los Angeles after a years-long battle with cancer.

Post was a longtime television regular who appeared in shows from "Cheers" to "Scrubs." But she was best known for her seven-season run on NBC's "Night Court," the Manhattan municipal court sitcom that ran from 1984 to 1992 and starred Harry Anderson as Judge Harry T. Stone.

Post became a full-time cast member of "Night Court" in season three as Christine Sullivan, a sincere and strong-willed woman who served as a constant foil to Dan Fielding, John Larroquette's womanizing, narcissistic prosecutor. With comic rebuttal, Post's Christine deflected Fielding's lechery throughout the series' run. Though an unrealized romance between Christine and Harry was often teased, "Night Court" ended with Fielding realizing the public defender was the love of his life.

Several of Post's "Night Court" co-stars have died in recent years. Harry Anderson died at age 65 in 2018. In July, Charles Robinson, who played the clerk Mac died at 75. NBC is currently developing a sequel to the series.

Post had two daughters with her second husband, TV producer and writer Michael A. Ross. In a statement, the family said "our pride is in who she was in addition to acting; a person who made elaborate cakes for friends, sewed curtains for first apartments and showed us how to be kind, loving and forgiving in an often harsh world."

Post started in television behind the camera, working on the production crew of the game shows "Double Dare" and "Card Sharks." Her first series regular role was in the Lee Majors action adventure series "The Fall Guy," in which she played Terri Michaels from 1982 to 1985.

Post's other credits include playing Cameron Diaz's mother in "There's Something About Mary"; Elliot Reid's mother on "Scrubs"; and appearances in the shows "The Love Boat," "The A-Team" and "Fantasy Island." While receiving chemotherapy treatments, Post acted in the Lifetime movie "Christmas Reservations" and guest starred on the ABC series "The Kids Are Alright."

## Taliban takes key northern Afghan cities as battles rage on

By RAHIM FAIEZ and BRIAN ROHAN Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Taliban fighters seized most of the capital of northern Afghanistan's key Kunduz province on Sunday, and took another neighboring provincial capital after a monthlong siege. The advances were the latest in a series of blows to government forces as U.S. troops complete their pullout after nearly two decades in the country.

The militiamen planted their flag in the main square of Kunduz city, where it was seen flying atop a traffic police booth, a video obtained by the Associated Press showed.

It was the fourth provincial capital to largely succumb to Taliban fighters in less than a week, as they ramp up a push across Afghan's regions, and wage an assassination campaign in the capital, Kabul.

Two provincial council members said the Taliban took control of the governor's office and police headquarters after a day of firefights, as well as the main prison building, where 500 inmates including Taliban fighters were freed.

Kunduz's capture would be a significant gain for the Taliban and a test of their ability to take and retain territory in their campaign against the Western-backed government.

It is one of the country's larger cities with a population of more than 340,000, and was a key area de-

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 43 of 68

fended against Taliban takeover by Western troops over the years.

Councilman Ghulam Rabani Rabani said that fighting was continuing at the city's airport and other parts of the city still in government hands. Kunduz is a strategic crossroads with good access to much of northern Afghanistan as well as Kabul, about 200 miles (335 kilometers) away.

Another provincial council member from Kunduz, Mohammad Yusouf Ayubi, also said Afghan forces only control the airport and main army barracks, and that the Taliban control the rest of the city.

"The innocent and poor must pay the cost of the war in Kunduz and other parts of the country, both government forces and the Taliban are the enemy of civilians," said Ayubi. "One can't provide security and the other doesn't care about people's safety," he added.

The Afghan government in Kabul denies it has lost the northern city, which would be the fourth provincial capital to be largely overrun by Taliban fighters in the last week. Interior Ministry Spokesman Mirwais Stanekzai said that Afghan security forces continue to fight and have already retaken some areas from the Taliban, without elaborating.

The Taliban has long considered the city a sought-after prize. It seized Kunduz, at the heart of a major agricultural region near Tajikistan, for around two weeks in 2015 before withdrawing in the face of a NATO-backed Afghan offensive. The insurgents pushed back into the city center a year later, briefly raising their flag before gradually being driven out again.

In Washington, senior officials from the White House National Security Council, State Department and Defense Department were in close contact with U.S. embassy officials in Kabul assessing the broader impact of the fall of Kunduz, according to a senior administration official. The official was not authorized to comment and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

But the official indicated that the Biden administration remains determined to stick to its plan to end the U.S. war in Afghanistan by the end of the month despite the Taliban's rapid strategic gains.

White House officials in recent days have raised concern about reports of retaliation against civilians in Taliban-controlled areas. They've also condemned last week's killing of Dawa Khan Menapal, the chief of the Afghan government's press operations for local and foreign media, and a bombing that targeted acting Defense Minister Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, killing eight and wounding more.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Friday that recent surge in attacks run counter to the "the Taliban claim to want international legitimacy" and offered that the militants "do not have to stay on this trajectory."

Also Sunday, the Taliban forces overran Taleqan, the capital of Takhar province which lies next to Kunduz, two Afghan lawmakers said. Takhar, a city of some 200,000, has particular significance for the anti-Taliban northern alliance fighters who joined the U.S.-led coalition to oust the religious militia in 2001.

Sayed Sharafuddin Aini, a member of the Afghan parliament from from Takhar province, said the Taliban managed to take the city in the afternoon after three months of advances during which it took control of all of the province's countryside.

Another MP from the area, Nazifa Yousefi Beg, said that all provincial officials including the governor, police chief, and council members were on the run. She said she worried about their safety and wanted the government to send reinforcements to the city.

Both lawmakers spoke by telephone in Kabul, where they live. They said they had been in touch with officials and provincial council members in the morning and early afternoon, and Beg was appealing directly to the acting defense minister at his office.

Taleqan had been under siege in recent weeks and largely cut off from the rest of the country by Taliban forces that had taken control of the surrounding countryside over the past three months.

The insurgents have been on a country-wide offensive that intensified as U.S. and NATO troops began to wrap up their withdrawal from the country this summer. With Taliban attacks increasing, Afghan security forces and government troops have retaliated with airstrikes aided by the United States. The fighting has raised growing concerns about civilian casualties.

On Saturday, Taliban fighters entered the capital of the northern Jawzjan province after sweeping through

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 44 of 68

nine of 10 districts in the province. Several other of the country's 34 provincial capitals are threatened as Taliban fighters sweep through large swaths of Afghanistan at a surprising speed.

Earlier last week their fighters captured the ninth of 10 police districts of Lashkar Gah, the capital of southern Helmand province. Heavy fighting there continues, as do U.S. and Afghan government airstrikes, one of which damaged a health clinic and high school.

The Defense Ministry confirmed airstrikes occurred but said they targeted Taliban positions, killing 54 fighters and wounding 23 others. It made no mention of a clinic or school being bombed in its statement. Deputy provincial council chairman Majid Akhund said the facilities had been under Taliban control when they were struck.

As they rolled through provincial capitals, the Taliban issued an English language statement on Sunday saying that residents, government employees, and security officials had nothing to fear from them.

"No former civil servant and other government employee including those who worked in the security sector ... should have any fear of the Mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate, nor flee towards other places," said the statement.

Revenge attacks and repressive treatment of women have been reported however in areas now under Taliban control.

## Weary US businesses confront new round of mask mandates

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

Businesses large and small, from McDonald's and Home Depot to local yoga studios, are reinstating mask mandates as U.S. coronavirus cases rise. Bars, gyms and restaurants across the country are requiring vaccines to get inside.

After a largely mask-free summer, it's a reversal no one wanted to see, brought on by the fast-spreading delta variant and new guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. But business owners and workers say they will do what they can to keep their doors open and not slow the economic gains of the last few months.

"We've already been through the worst of the challenges when we shut down the indoors last year," said Brack May, the chef and owner of Cowbell, a New Orleans burger joint. "Let's just get ahead of the curve here."

May recently began requiring customers to show their vaccine cards for indoor dining. He said he wants to protect his workers, who are required to be vaccinated but have young children at home, as well as his neighborhood, where some musicians recently contracted the coronavirus.

May expects that eventually, vaccine rules like his will be commonplace. Next month, New York City will start requiring vaccinations to enter restaurants, gyms and theaters.

But for now, customers are far more likely to encounter mask mandates. After lifting mask recommendations for fully vaccinated people in May, the CDC reversed course in late July, recommending masks for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people in areas of higher transmission.

The shifting guidance has caused confusion over which rules to enforce and how. Walmart and Target, for instance, recently began requiring masks for employees \_\_\_ but not customers \_\_\_ in areas where virus transmission rates are high. McDonald's is requiring masks for both employees and customers. Home Depot's mask mandate is nationwide.

A handful of places, like Louisiana, the San Francisco Bay area and Las Vegas, are mandating masks indoors.

Many business owners didn't wait for the CDC or their local governments before acting. In mid-July, Tamra Patterson reinstated a mask mandate and reduced seating capacity from 200 to 65 at Chef Tam's Underground Cafe, the restaurant she owns in Memphis, Tennessee.

"I need every dollar and dime and penny I can get, but if I don't have employees healthy, I don't have a business. If customers are sick, I have nothing," Patterson said.

Customers are generally receptive to the mask mandate, Patterson said. Only one has walked out.

PanTerra Gallery, a women's clothing store in Bisbee, Arizona, reinstated a mask mandate for customers

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 45 of 68

a few weeks ago after watching cases climb nationwide.

"We're a tourist town, so it was just a matter of time before it reached us again," said Lisa Wines, a PanTerra employee. Most people are fine with the new mandate, she said, but some turn around and stomp out of the store.

Not every business supports the mandates. Basilico's Pasta e Vino, a restaurant in Huntington Beach, California, has railed against masks on social media. A sign on its door requires patrons to prove that they're unvaccinated.

Some workers also don't want to see masks return.

Dru W., a grocery employee in Houston who asked not to use his full name for fear of reprisals at work, said he was fully vaccinated months ago and enjoys the freedom it gives him to go without a mask. Few stores around him are enforcing the new CDC guidelines, he said, and he won't either.

"I didn't get both my doses and deal with the rather gnarly side effects only to be told to go back to the way things were during the pandemic," he said.

But other retail workers see masks as an important way to end the pandemic. Austin Ray Shanks, who works at a Walmart in Monroe, Washington, said he finds masks uncomfortable but necessary. He's disappointed that many customers at his store refuse to wear them.

Marshall Crawley said his gym in Morrisville, North Carolina, recently announced that it would require masks for both vaccinated and unvaccinated patrons. But the rule isn't being enforced, he said.

"It doesn't really feel like it is doing much good wearing a mask when everyone around me is not," said Crawley, a client manager for J&J Editorial, a managed services company for scholarly publishing.

Crawley thinks the CDC went too far when it told vaccinated people they could remove their masks this spring. Now, he said, it will be too hard to convince people to put them back on.

Jose Backer, who works in customer service at a food packaging manufacturer in Los Angeles County, said his company began letting vaccinated workers remove their masks earlier this year. But soon everyone stopped wearing them. That angered Backer, who doesn't want a repeat of a COVID-19 outbreak that sickened him and others at his workplace last year. He's relieved that his county is requiring masks for everyone again.

The new wave of mandates give some comfort to companies that never gave up on masks, even when U.S. cases ebbed earlier this summer.

Liz Manasek, the co-owner of Warner Bodies, a custom truck manufacturer in Elwood, Indiana, kept a mask policy in place after watching other companies struggle with different rules for vaccinated and unvaccinated workers.

About 60% of the company's 105 employees are now vaccinated, she said. She has told employees she won't consider removing the mandate until that level reaches 80%.

Manasek has gotten some pushback from workers, but she reminds them that the policy has been effective. Only one or two employees have tested positive for COVID-19 since the pandemic began, she said.

"We've just got to hold out and keep on the basics," she said.

## **Pandemic set off deadly rise in speeding that hasn't stopped**

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Motorists put the pedal to the metal during the pandemic and police are worried as roads get busy with the final stretch of summer travel.

The latest data shows the number of highway deaths in 2020 was the greatest in more than a decade even though cars and trucks drove fewer miles during the pandemic.

"Summer is an incredibly dangerous time. And it culminates with Labor Day, that last hurrah," said Pam Shadel Fischer of the Governors Highway Safety Association.

Traffic data indicates the higher death toll was related to higher average speeds in conjunction with more of those on the roads driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol and a slight decline in seatbelt use.

Motorists do not seem to be slowing down.

"People are flying down the roads," Maine State Police Cpl. Doug Cropper said of summer traffic on

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 46 of 68

Interstate 95. "It's just ridiculous."

Tickets issued by the California Highway Patrol for speeding in excess of 100 mph from January to June were nearly double pre-pandemic levels, and the number of tickets for reckless driving citations grew, as well, officials said.

In New York state, the percentage of fatalities for which speeding was the primary cause and the total number of speeding tickets grew from January through June, compared to the year before the pandemic, officials said.

"There is continued concern about the rise in speeding and aggressive driving as we enter the heart of the vacation travel season and increased traffic volumes on the highways," said Beau Duffy, spokesperson for New York State Police.

The extreme speeding dates to the early days of the pandemic.

With police distracted by civil disobedience and scaling back routine stops for safety, the lightly traveled roads quickly turned into the wild west in many places. In New York City, super cars like Ferraris and Lamborghinis blazed down empty streets, with roaring engines disturbing residents trying to sleep. Motorists from coast to coast were ticketed at eye-watering speeds.

Several lead-footed motorists took advantage to set new records on an illegal, nonstop race from coast to coast called the Cannonball Run.

A Mainer used a rented Ford Mustang GT with 130 gallons worth of fuel tanks to set a solo record for racing from New York to Los Angeles in 25 hours, 55 minutes. A team set a new record soon after his record-setting jaunt.

Fred Ashmore said New York was a "ghost town" as he sped away in May 2020, topping out at 159 mph and averaging about 108 mph over the 2,806-mile trip.

"There's no person who's never sped," he said. "I just sped faster and longer."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration sounded the warning early in the pandemic about speeding and reckless driving.

The agency expected fatalities to decline with fewer miles driven, similar to previous declines during economic downturns. But the fatalities grew throughout the pandemic, and even picked up steam in the latter part of the year.

In the end, traffic deaths nationwide in 2020 grew about 7.2% to 38,680 even though there was a 13.2% reduction in the number of miles traveled, according to the NHTSA estimates. It was the deadliest year on highways since 2007.

Joseph Schwieterman, a transportation expert at DePaul University, said there are a combination of factors at play. Some drivers are emboldened by the lack of enforcement, and others tend to join them in going with the flow.

At the same time, motorists feel safer speeding because they are putting too much faith in air bags, anti-lock brakes and other safety features, he said.

Unfortunately there's no silver bullet to reversing the trend.

Police and highway safety officials must ensure speed limits take into account all users, and then they must vigorously enforce them with a visible presence, said Joseph Young, spokesperson for the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

Some police departments are launching public awareness campaigns.

"Summer holidays should be a time of fun and family, not sorrow and tragedy," Washington State Police Chief John R. Batiste said as California, Oregon and Washington kicked off a summer travel safety enforcement effort.

In places like California's Los Angeles County, heavy congestion can slow motorists down naturally.

But those flashing blue lights remain the best antidote for speeding and bad behavior, said Fischer, from the Governors Highway Safety Association.

"High visibility enforcement works," she said. "When people see police officers, they will think twice about what they're doing."

## Fauci hopeful COVID vaccines get full OK by FDA within weeks

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — The U.S. government's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, said Sunday that he was hopeful the Food and Drug Administration will give full approval to the coronavirus vaccine by month's end and predicted the potential move will spur a wave of vaccine mandates in the private sector as well as schools and universities.

The FDA has only granted emergency-use approval of the Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, but the agency is expected to soon give full approval to Pfizer.

The Biden administration has stated that the federal government will not mandate vaccinations beyond the federal workforce, but is increasingly urging state and local governments as well as businesses to consider such mandates. Fauci, who is President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser, said "mandates at the local level need to be done" to help curb the spread of the virus.

"I hope — I don't predict — I hope that it will be within the next few weeks. I hope it's within the month of August," Fauci said of FDA approval of the vaccine. "If that's the case, you're going to see the empowerment of local enterprises, giving mandates that could be colleges, universities, places of business, a whole variety and I strongly support that. The time has come. ... We've got to go the extra step to get people vaccinated."

Fauci's comments come as the Biden administration is weighing what levers it can push to encourage more unvaccinated Americans to get their shots as the delta variant continues to surge through much of the United States.

Biden recently approved rules requiring federal workers to provide proof of vaccination or face regular testing, mask mandates and travel restrictions. Biden is also awaiting a formal recommendation from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on potentially requiring U.S. troops to get vaccinated.

The administration has become more vocal in its support of vaccine mandates at a moment when high-profile companies have informed employees that coronavirus vaccination requirements are in the works, and some localities have adopted or are contemplating vaccine requirements to dine indoors.

United Airlines informed its employees that they will need to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 25 or five weeks after the FDA grants full approval to one of the vaccines — whichever date comes first.

Disney and Walmart have announced vaccine mandates for white-collar workers, and Microsoft, Google and Facebook said they will require proof of vaccination for employees and visitors to their U.S. offices. Tyson Foods has also announced it will require all U.S. employees to get vaccinated by November.

There's also been pushback.

The U.S. Supreme Court last week was asked to block a plan by Indiana University to require students and employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19. It's the first time the high court has been asked to weigh in on a vaccine mandate and comes as some corporations, states and cities are also contemplating or have adopted vaccine requirements for workers or even to dine indoors.

Randi Weingarten, president of American Federation of Teachers union, said on Sunday that she personally supports a vaccine mandate for educators.

"As a matter of personal conscience, I think that we need to be working with our employers — not opposing them on vaccine mandates," said Weingarten, who estimated about 90% of AFT members are already vaccinated.

Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, on Sunday all but endorsed vaccine mandates, saying, "I celebrate when I see businesses deciding that they're going to mandate that for their employees."

"Yes, I think we ought to use every public health tool we can when people are dying," Collins said.

Fauci and Weingarten spoke on NBC's "Meet the Press," and Collins appeared on ABC's "This Week."

## New push to disband Minneapolis police after Floyd's death

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 48 of 68

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM Associated Press/Report for America

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — On a hot summer afternoon, Latrell Snider and his partner knocked on Abdullahi Mohamed's door, introduced themselves and launched their pitch: Minneapolis, they said, has a chance to replace its police department with something new, and they wanted Mohamed's support.

With his children looking on from a living room window, Mohamed reacted cautiously, saying he likes police and relies on them to keep his family safe. When Snider assured him that a new public safety department would still have a police unit but would do things differently — such as responding to some 911 calls without armed officers — Mohamed brightened.

"I think that would be a better idea," he said.

More than a year after George Floyd's death sparked a failed push to abolish the Minneapolis Police Department, activists and several City Council members are trying again, with a well-funded initiative that would ask voters in November whether the department — disparaged by critics for what they say is an enduring culture of brutality — should be dismantled.

In its place would be a public safety department that employs a "comprehensive public health approach" and licensed peace officers "if necessary." The new department would no longer be under the sole command of the mayor's office, which is significant given that incumbent Mayor Jacob Frey opposes abolishing the police department while a majority of City Council members supports the idea.

More than 30 local groups are pushing for change under the "Yes 4 Minneapolis" banner. They gathered 20,000 signatures to get the measure on the ballot — almost twice the number necessary — and have raised about \$1 million, including \$500,000 from Open Society Policy Center, which has ties to billionaire George Soros.

"What we knew as public safety — which is only the police right now, the only option that we have — was unacceptable," said Brian Fullman, lead organizer with one of the groups, Barbershop and Black Congregation Cooperative. "The murder of George Floyd ignited a lot of historical pain and disrespect that we have been going through, and we made the decision that we no longer wanted to have what we have now as the only option for public safety."

A majority of City Council members first began pushing to eliminate the police department soon after Floyd's death, but they failed to meet deadlines to get it on the ballot last November. The Rev. JaNaé Bates, a leader of the Yes 4 Minneapolis campaign, said the ease with which the campaign gathered signatures shows the momentum for change is still there more than a year after Floyd's death.

"The residents of Minneapolis really were the ones who made the call for this, who were like, we can't just let this lesson that took place in the summer to be something that fizzles out, and then what? We just wait for the next person to be killed by the police?" she said.

Minneapolis, like most other major U.S. cities, has been on edge due to rising violence and property crime in almost every neighborhood in the past year. And the police department is more than 200 officers, or about 25%, below its authorized strength due mostly to a wave of retirements and disability leaves following Floyd's death.

Both factors have energized opponents of the initiative. All of Mpls — a new group that has raised more than \$109,000 — will begin campaigning against the proposal in the coming weeks with door knocking, community events, mailers and digital ads through the fall.

All of Mpls campaign manager Leili Fatehi called the proposal to eliminate the department "a gimmick." She said plenty of residents want police to be held accountable and changes in the department, but they also worry about rising crime.

"It's not getting us to the real solutions that balance those two concerns," she said.

Opponents also say the ballot question doesn't guarantee that a new public safety department would have police officers at all. Instead, it says officers would be included "if necessary to fulfill the department's duties." Bill Rodriguez, co-founder of Operation Safety Now, called the proposed amendment a "trojan horse" and warned that the campaign's end goal is to abolish police.

"The amendment doesn't say there will be a police force — it says there could be, maybe, if necessary,"



he said. "That's the most important thing that needs to be understood about this amendment."

It's among several aspects of the ballot question that city officials plan to highlight with an explanatory note in November. Activists are trying to block such a note, arguing that the city is improperly trying to influence voters.

Regardless of how the ballot question fares, the city remains under pressure to make changes. The police department is the target of federal and state investigations into policing practices, and both investigations could force widespread change. In addition, the mayor and Chief Medaria Arradondo have launched several policy changes since Floyd's death, including requiring new training on de-escalation, overhauling use of force restrictions and strengthening the disciplinary process.

Details of what a new public safety department would look like are scarce, but Bates said that's intentional, to get city residents involved in the process. If the amendment passes, council members would need to first pass an ordinance to establish the new department, explain how it would function and how its commissioner is selected. It's not clear how long such a process would take.

Ed Brown, 69, listened to Snider's pitch on his north Minneapolis doorstep in July. Brown, who is Black, told The Associated Press that a new public safety department seems like a good plan. He thinks it would mean police officers are no longer sent to some calls that they aren't equipped to deal with and that can otherwise end in violence.

"What we need to do is reimagine the police department," Brown said.

"That is to say not necessarily defund but maybe in some cases even give them more money if they're going to do the right thing with it," he said. "We have to have the proper responses for the proper situations."

## More Cubans try dangerous trip to US across Florida Straits

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

ORLANDO NODARSE, Cuba (AP) — Zuleydis Elledias has gotten up each morning for the past two months hoping for a phone call, a message — any news on the fate of her husband and nephew, who disappeared at sea after the boat they were in capsized as they tried to reach Florida.

Another half dozen families in the small town of Orlando Nodarse, 35 miles (55 kilometers) west of Havana and near the port of Mariel, are living with the same uncertainty.

"Due to the pandemic my husband lost his job. Many places closed and he had been home for more than a year. Every time he went to his workplace, they told him to wait. And that made him desperate because we have a 2-year-old son," Elledias, a 38-year-old homemaker, told The Associated Press through tears.

Cuba is seeing a surge in unauthorized migration to the United States, fueled by an economic crisis exacerbated by the pandemic, increased U.S. sanctions and cutbacks in aid from its also-crisis-wracked Venezuelan ally. That has led to shortages in many goods and a series of protests that shook the island on July 11.

And legal ways to leave have been strained by the Trump administration's near-closure of the U.S. Consulate in 2017 following a series of mysterious illnesses among diplomatic personnel that some claimed could result from an attack — allegations Cuba bitterly denies.

Most Cubans who want to try for a U.S. visa now have to go to embassies in other countries — and getting there is almost impossible due to sharp cuts in air traffic during the pandemic. Most can't afford tickets anyway unless relatives abroad can front them the money.

That has pushed many Cubans to launch themselves into the sea on small boats or rafts to attempt the dangerous crossing of the Florida Straits to the United States.

The U.S. Coast Guard said recently it has intercepted 595 Cubans at sea since the current fiscal year started on Oct. 1. That's larger than any any full fiscal year since 2017 — during which the U.S. announced that even Cubans reaching U.S. shores were likely to be expelled, ending a longstanding policy of granting asylum to those who reached dry land.

It's still small in comparison with the nearly 5,400 halted at sea in 2016 or the dramatic crises of 1994-

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 50 of 68

1995 and 1980, when Cuba's government temporarily stopped trying to block departures and tens of thousands set out en masse. Thousands died in the ocean.

It's also still far smaller than the current flow of those who have somehow made their way to the continent and worked their way north. The U.S. Border Patrol had recorded 26,196 Cubans trying to enter the U.S. without documents between Oct. 1 and June 30, most by land.

As well as her husband — 45-year-old driver Fernando Quiñones — Elledias is also awaiting word on her nephew, Ismel Reyes, 22, who worked on a farm.

They were among a group of 18 men and two women who left Cuba for Florida on May 25. The boat sank the following night and survivors were rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard about 18 miles (29 kilometers) southwest of Key West. The search by sea, land and air lasted for days.

"Something happened, I don't know, the currents, the boat flipped. The United States Coast Guard rescued eight people alive, found two bodies and there are 10 people missing," Elledias said.

Among the survivors were four cousins of Elledias, some of whom have already been repatriated to Cuba.

Elledias, her sister Sudenis — Reyes' mother — and other Orlando Nodarse residents who spoke with the AP all agreed that the risky decision to head for the United States was triggered by the economic crisis and the difficulties in obtaining a visa.

Cuban historian Alina Bárbara López noted that two earlier mass exoduses by sea were spawned by crises and Cuban authorities opened the borders as a kind of release valve in the face of social pressure.

In 1980, with unhappy Cubans pouring into foreign embassy compounds seeking visas, Fidel Castro opened the port at Mariel for people who wanted to leave and 125,000 Cubans rushed north, setting off a political crisis for the government of U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The dire economic tailspin of the early 1990s following the collapse of Cuba's aid from the Soviet Union led tens of thousands to put to sea in innertubes, makeshift rafts and highjacked boats. Then too, many died.

But now Havana is "trapped" because it cannot open its borders due to migration agreements signed with the Washington in that wake of that crisis, she said.

Meanwhile, Cuba's economic reforms have only been superficial, López said. The economy remains stagnant.

"All this makes the underlying political foundation of this crisis much stronger than in the previous" crises, she said.

Cuban authorities acknowledge there are "symptoms" of a possible migratory crisis but say it could be deactivated if President Joe Biden fulfills a campaign promise to jettison Trump's tighter sanctions, which were aimed at trying to drive the Communist Party from power, and resumes the dialogue launched by former U.S. President Barack Obama.

"The situation we have now is the result of a number of negative factors," said Jesús Perz Calderón of the United States department at Cuba's Foreign Ministry. "In the first place, the deterioration of the economy as a result of COVID-19 ... but at the same time the resurgence of an economic war of blockade against Cuba by the United States."

José Ramón Cabañas, a former Cuban ambassador to the U.S. and current director of the Center for International Policy Research, said both nations have instruments in place to prevent an exodus to Florida, "There are agreements in force but they are not being fully applied," Cabañas said.

The United States had been providing 22,000 visas a year to Cuba for two decades until 2017, when Trump froze relations. The consulate shutdown made applying for a visa almost moot for most Cubans.

In addition, at the beginning of 2017, Obama eliminated the policy known as "wet foot-dry foot" that let Cubans who reached U.S. shores remain, usually as refugees, while those caught at sea were sent back.

Back in Orlando Nodarse, Elledias hopes a miracle will bring home her loved ones.

"I would tell people who are thinking about this option (of crossing the Florida Straits) not to do it, that it is not a safe route. There is no money in the world that can pay for this suffering we are going through," she said.

## Some praise, some doubts as Facebook rolls out a prayer tool

By HOLLY MEYER and DAVID CRARY Associated Press

Facebook already asks for your thoughts. Now it wants your prayers.

The social media giant has rolled out a new prayer request feature, a tool embraced by some religious leaders as a cutting-edge way to engage the faithful online. Others are eyeing it warily as they weigh its usefulness against the privacy and security concerns they have with Facebook.

In Facebook Groups employing the feature, members can use it to rally prayer power for upcoming job interviews, illnesses and other personal challenges big and small. After they create a post, other users can tap an "I prayed" button, respond with a "like" or other reaction, leave a comment or send a direct message.

Facebook began testing it in the U.S. in December as part of an ongoing effort to support faith communities, according to a statement attributed to a company spokesperson.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic we've seen many faith and spirituality communities using our services to connect, so we're starting to explore new tools to support them," it said.

The Rev. Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Church in Dallas, a Southern Baptist megachurch, was among the pastors enthusiastically welcoming of the prayer feature.

"Facebook and other social media platforms continue to be tremendous tools to spread the Gospel of Christ and connect believers with one another — especially during this pandemic," he said. "While any tool can be misused, I support any effort like this that encourages people to turn to the one true God in our time of need."

Adeel Zeb, a Muslim chaplain at The Claremont Colleges in California, also was upbeat.

"As long as these companies initiate proper precautions and protocols to ensure the safety of religiously marginalized communities, people of faith should jump on board supporting this vital initiative," he said.

Under its data policy, Facebook uses the information it gathers in a variety of ways, including to personalize advertisements. But the company says advertisers are not able to use a person's prayer posts to target ads.

The Rev. Bob Stec, pastor of St. Ambrose Catholic Parish in Brunswick, Ohio, said via email that on one hand, he sees the new feature as a positive affirmation of people's need for an "authentic community" of prayer, support and worship.

But "even while this is a 'good thing,' it is not necessary the deeply authentic community that we need," he said. "We need to join our voices and hands in prayer. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder with each other and walk through great moments and challenges together."

Stec also worried about privacy concerns surrounding the sharing of deeply personal traumas.

"Is it wise to post everything about everyone for the whole world to see?" he said. "On a good day we would all be reflective and make wise choices. When we are under stress or distress or in a difficult moment, it's almost too easy to reach out on Facebook to everyone."

However, Jacki King, the minister to women at Second Baptist Conway, a Southern Baptist congregation in Conway, Arkansas, sees a potential benefit for people who are isolated amid the pandemic and struggling with mental health, finances and other issues.

"They're much more likely to get on and make a comment than they are to walk into a church right now," King said. "It opens a line of communication."

Bishop Paul Egensteiner of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Metropolitan New York Synod said he has been dismayed by some aspects of Facebook but welcomes the feature, which bears similarities to a digital prayer request already used by the synod's churches.

"I hope this is a genuine effort from Facebook to help religious organizations advance their mission," Egensteiner said. "I also pray that Facebook will continue improving its practices to stop misinformation on social media, which is also affecting our religious communities and efforts."

The Rev. Thomas McKenzie, who leads Church of the Redeemer, an Anglican congregation in Nashville, Tennessee, said he wanted to hate the feature — he views Facebook as willing to exploit anything for

money, even people's faith.

But he thinks it could be encouraging to those willing to use it: "Facebook's evil motivations might have actually provided a tool that can be for good."

His chief concern with any Internet technology, he added, is that it can encourage people to stay physically apart even when it is unnecessary.

"You cannot participate fully in the body of Christ online. It's not possible," McKenzie said. "But these tools may give people the impression that it's possible."

Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Union of Reform Judaism, said he understood why some people would view the initiative skeptically.

"But in the moment we're in, I don't know many people who don't have a big part of their prayer life online," he said. "We've all been using the chat function for something like this — sharing who we are praying for."

Crossroads Community Church, a nondenominational congregation in Vancouver, Washington, saw the function go live about 10 weeks ago in its Facebook Group, which has roughly 2,500 members.

About 20 to 30 prayer requests are posted each day, eliciting 30 to 40 responses apiece, according to Gabe Moreno, executive pastor of ministries. Each time someone responds, the initial poster gets a notification.

Deniece Flippen, a moderator for the group, turns off the alerts for her posts, knowing that when she checks back she will be greeted with a flood of support.

Flippen said that unlike with in-person group prayer, she doesn't feel the Holy Spirit or the physical manifestations she calls the "holy goosebumps." But the virtual experience is fulfilling nonetheless.

"It's comforting to see that they're always there for me and we're always there for each other," Flippen said.

Members are asked on Fridays to share which requests got answered, and some get shoutouts in the Sunday morning livestreamed services.

Moreno said he knows Facebook is not acting out of purely selfless motivation — it wants more user engagement with the platform. But his church's approach to it is theologically based, and they are trying to follow Jesus' example.

"We should go where the people are," Moreno said. "The people are on Facebook. So we're going to go there."

## What follows Confederate statues? 1 Mississippi city's fight

By LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press/Report for America

GREENWOOD, Miss. (AP) — For more than a century, one of Mississippi's largest and most elaborate Confederate monuments has looked out over the lawn at the courthouse in the center of Greenwood, a Black-majority city with a history of civil rights protests and clashes. Protesters have demonstrated at the base of the towering pillar with six Confederate figures — some residents demanding removal amid a racial reckoning across the country, others advocating for the statue's protection as a piece of history.

Now, after years of debate, a new statue will be erected in Greenwood — one of Emmett Till, the Black 14-year-old who was brutally beaten and shot in 1955 by white men just 10 miles from the city. The likeness of Till, whose death is still under federal investigation, will be one of only a handful of statues of African Americans in Mississippi, where dozens of Confederate monuments still dot the landscape at courthouses, town squares and other prominent locations.

Greenwood is one of hundreds of cities and towns nationwide grappling with painful, expensive questions: What should be done with these tributes to the Civil War and the Confederate soldiers who fought in it? And, what monuments should go up in their place to represent the community?

Across Mississippi, multiple places have voted to remove monuments; the few that have followed through found it costly, with a \$1 million bill at the University of Mississippi. In Charlottesville, Virginia, a larger-than-life figure of Gen. Robert E. Lee was recently carted away by truck — nearly four years after a deadly, racist rally there. Dozens of Confederate statues fell across the country during the 2020 protests sparked

# Broton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 53 of 68

by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis — many in liberal-leaning urban centers, while those in rural or conservative places stood.

But far fewer cities have solidified plans for new tributes or monuments in their place.

In Greenwood, as in many places, change has come slowly.

The Leflore County Board of Supervisors voted more than a year ago, in June 2020, to remove the Confederate statue, erected in 1913 by the Varina Jefferson Davis Chapter United Daughters of the Confederacy. The board — where four of five members are Black — stipulated that the monument, whose most prominent figure is former Mississippi Gov. and Civil War Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys, not be replaced by any piece honoring the civil rights movement or other county history.

The vote followed a yearslong discussion about what to do with the monument after a Black public schoolteacher and his father, Troy Brown Jr. and Troy Brown Sr., began petitioning for removal in 2017. The county initially came up with an idea to leave the Confederate statue and build a civil rights monument — one that would likely include Till — on the courthouse lawn to “create balance.”

But community members continued to push for removal. The county’s Black board members voted 4-0 to remove the statue. The lone white member, Sam Abraham, did not attend the meeting. He later told the Greenwood Commonwealth newspaper he would have voted to keep the Confederate statue.

Board member Reginald Moore voted to move the monument, saying it “serves as a symbol of intimidation, of fear, of treason, domestic terrorism, slavery and murder.”

Member Robert Collins said the statue didn’t bother him, but that if it caused pain for others, it should be removed. Collins was a young boy when Till was killed; he recalled the fear it ignited in the Black community and said it’s a story the community should not forget. But he was vocal in his opinion that another monument shouldn’t replace it, regardless of its meaning or intent.

“The courthouse belongs to the people of Leflore County,” he said. “If we’re going to remove that monument, we shouldn’t put no monument on the property of Leflore County.”

But still, the Confederate statue stands, the process slowed by bureaucracy, with no concrete plan for removal.

Board members did not return calls from The Associated Press inquiring about an update. Mississippi Department of Archives and History spokesperson Michael Morris said county attorney Joyce Chiles reached out to their department for a consultation in November, but noted that the agency hasn’t heard from her since.

In April, Democratic state Sen. David Jordan of Greenwood reignited a conversation about a Till statue in the city of 13,500. He’s one of the last people alive locally who attended the trial for Till’s killers.

“There are so many heroes that need to be recognized,” Jordan said of the need for the cities to make plans for new monuments when Confederate ones are gone. “It’s about trying to get justice for so many good people that have been mistreated.”

When Till was killed, Jordan was just starting college as a freshman at a historically black college nearby. He and three friends pooled their money to buy enough gasoline — at 25 cents a gallon — to drive to the Sumner courthouse for the trial. Jordan remembers seeing the defendants drinking Coca-Cola in the sweltering courtroom and laughing with their wives and children — clearly not fearing conviction.

“They were the heroes, the most respected people,” Jordan, now 88, said. “Many said that they did the right thing, killing him. They thought Emmett Till was out of place.”

Till was visiting relatives in Mississippi from his home in Chicago. He was accused of whistling at and making sexual advances on 21-year-old Carolyn Bryant at a grocery store. Her husband, Roy Bryant, and his half-brother J.W. Milam abducted Till from his great-uncle’s home at gunpoint.

Till’s brutalized body, weighted down with a cotton gin fan, was later pulled from the Tallahatchie River — the same river that claimed the Union merchant ship The Star of the West during the Civil War 90 years earlier. The ship is memorialized on Greenwood’s monument, with the pilot wheel etched into one side.

Images of Till’s mutilated body in his open casket gave witness to the depth of racial hatred in the Deep South and inspired civil rights campaigns. Bryant and Milam were acquitted, though they later confessed

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 54 of 68

to the crime in a magazine interview. Both are now dead.

Sen. Jordan said it would feel like poetic justice to erect the Till statue in front of the courthouse — the very place where dogs were set on Black residents trying to register to vote, in a city where racist Citizens' Councils maintained regional headquarters.

"If we can show that change can happen here, it can happen anywhere," Jordan said.

But the county board wouldn't budge. Collins said in April that allowing the Till statue on the courthouse lawn would be a "double standard."

"To move one statue and put another statue up, I wouldn't be representing all the people I'm supposed to be representing if I did that," Collins, who is Black, said during a board meeting.

Jordan was hurt by the decision, especially given that the Confederate statue also hadn't budged yet.

"I told them, let the Emmett Till statue be there for 100 years, and then you can move it," he said. "Then, it would be balanced. But I don't understand 'double standard.' What kind of double standard? Just give me equal time."

Ultimately, late last month, the council voted unanimously in favor of erecting the Till statue, just not on the courthouse lawn. Instead, the statue will go up in a park half a mile away from the courthouse and the Confederate monument. The Till tribute will be funded, at least in part, with \$150,000 from a bond bill from the state legislature, Jordan said, and he plans for the statue to stand at 9 feet tall, made of bronze.

He's also decided to be optimistic about the location. The park is by the railroad tracks that once separated where Black and white residents lived and worked in racially segregated Greenwood — the Greenwood Jordan knew growing up. He said he hopes the statue's presence there will unite the community.

For now, residents on both sides of the issue are frustrated with officials' lack of a plan.

Melissa Earnest — a white resident who grew up in Drew, 3 miles from the shed where Emmett Till was beaten before he was taken to the Tallahatchie River — wants to see movement toward removal, and more monuments to civil rights figures whose stories have been ignored.

"It's a representation of progress," she said.

Larry McCluney said he considers the statue a tribute to Confederate soldiers who died on the battlefield. He's also in favor of the Till statue — even at the courthouse — as long as the Confederate statue stands.

"It's the same thing if I went out to the graveyard and knocked over one of your family members' headstones," said McCluney, a history teacher and commander-in-chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, an organization for male descendants of Confederate veterans that spans 30,000 members. "That's how people feel about these things: You are removing the only thing I have that I can go to as a family member and remember my ancestors."

Brown Sr., one of the residents who petitioned for removal, said Greenwood needs to show the world what it stands for.

"I'm not saying we shouldn't talk about the Confederacy, but we definitely should not celebrate it in a sense that we have that statue looking over the town, as if it was something we're proud of," Brown said. "That young boy's life — that's a story worth being told."

## Devastated by wildfires, Turkey's beekeepers see grim future

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkey's wildfires have left little behind, turning green forests into ashen, barren hills. The destruction is being intensely felt by Turkey's beekeepers, who have lost thousands of hives as well as the pine trees and the insects their bees depend on.

Twelve days of deadly wildfires have dealt a major blow to Turkey's honey industry and even its longer term prospects appear bleak.

Nearly all of the residents of Osmaniye, a neighborhood in Turkey's southwestern Mediterranean resort of Marmaris, are beekeepers. Their beehives once looked out to the green hills of Mugla province where Marmaris is located and provided the main income for many families.

Ali Kaya, 33, is second-generation beekeeper. After his father's death, he took over the honey business

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 55 of 68

his father had set up in 1979. Yet this week Kaya lost 250 hives in Osmaniye to the wildfires, as well as the entire ecosystem upon which his bees depend, so just buying new hives will not solve his economic woes.

He says the entire region is in shock.

"There is nothing left here, no trees left. Animals burned. Some people's homes and roofs burned," he said. "I have no idea what we'll do. Our heads are all messed up, our mental outlook destroyed. We can't think clearly here in Osmaniye."

The red pine trees endemic to Anatolia span the Taurus mountain system. They can be seen along Turkey's coast from the eastern Mediterranean all the way to the northern Aegean Sea, including a great number around Mugla. The pines provide a welcoming habitat for scores of shrubs and make an ideal environment for bees.

Bees in Mugla produce a special pine-based honey. Unlike most of the honey in the world, which is created from the nectars of flowers, bees in Mugla collect the secretions of *Marchalina hellenica*, a scale insect that lives on pine trees and feeds on their sap. What they leave behind, the bees take to make a nutritious honey.

Wildfires in Turkey started on July 28 amid a ferocious heat wave and raged on for days across more than half of Turkey's provinces. As of Sunday, some wildfires were still burning in the provinces of Mugla, Aydin and Isparta. At least eight people and countless animals have been killed. Villages and resorts had to be evacuated, with some people fleeing to beaches to be rescued by sea. The wildfires also threatened two coal-burning power plants.

The Turkish government has promised to rebuild the many burned homes and compensate villagers for their animals, along with providing other aid. But it has also been criticized for its lack of firefighting planes, poor planning and overall inability to stop the fires.

Samil Tuncay Bestoy, who heads the Environmental and Bee Protection Association, said hundreds of thousands of hives were saved purely by an accident of timing. Many nomadic beekeepers, including some from Mugla, each year move their hives to Turkey's inland upper plains in the spring and come to Mugla from mid-August on for the pine trees. Those beehives were spared from burning but their whole production cycle has been shattered.

"Now they don't have anywhere to come back to, there are no forests left," said Bestoy, a beekeeper himself. "The bees and the beekeepers are waiting at the plains with no idea of what to do."

Since they cannot remain on the plains for long because of their feeding needs, the association was working to find healthy, temporary forest locations in Mugla, which is already highly populated with hives.

It's a short-term solution to save the bees but points to the need for the close coordination between the government, bee-keeping associations and beekeepers to chart the way forward. Workers may have to find new beekeeping routes or even jobs in other industries.

Even before the wildfires, Turkey's beekeepers were already suffering from climate change, with droughts and high temperatures reducing the pine trees' sap and killing the bugs.

"Beekeeping is a fundamental culture of Anatolia and we were already warning that we may lose it to the climate crisis. These fires have added fuel to that fire," Bestoy said.

Further to the east, forests in Antalya's Manavgat district were also incinerated. Beekeeper Guven Karagol had to leave his hives behind once those flames grew near.

"The fires came quickly and my beehives were burning, I could only watch. Six years of my work, this year's labor, burned," he told Turkish IHA news agency.

When he returned at daybreak after the fires, he saw some bees emerging and realized that 20 out of 100 hives had somehow survived.

"I thought I can't do this in a completely blackened nature, my hopes were shattered," he said. "These 20 hives gave me hope."

The Turkish government has said that the burned forests would be reforested and groups have launched campaigns for saplings but many experts say the forests need to be left alone to regenerate.

Medine Yilmaz, another second-generation beekeeper in Osmaniye, also lost her hives and had spoken

to Turkish officials who visited the area. She wanted the remaining trees to be allowed to stay upright to see if they could regenerate but she said authorities were planning on tearing down everything.

"We rose up as younger people and stopped the bulldozers. If they come again, I will lay down in front of them and not let them cut the trees," she said.

Her husband, Yusuf, was devastated.

"I don't care about the houses that burned. Our only sadness is that nature has disappeared, our only livelihood were these pines," he said. "Homes will be rebuilt, wounds bandaged but nature will not heal for 70-80 years."

## Census experts puzzled by high rate of unanswered questions

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

Census Bureau statisticians and outside experts are trying to unravel a mystery: Why were so many questions about households in the 2020 census left unanswered?

Residents did not respond to a multitude of questions about sex, race, Hispanic background, family relationships and age, even when providing a count of the number of people living in the home, according to documents released by the agency. Statisticians had to fill in the gaps.

Reflecting an early stage in the number crunching, the documents show that 10% to 20% of questions were not answered in the 2020 census, depending on the question and state. According to the Census Bureau, later phases of processing show the actual rates were lower.

The rates have averaged 1% to 3% in 170 years of previous U.S. censuses, according to University of Minnesota demographer Steven Ruggles.

The information is important because data with demographic details will be used for drawing congressional and legislative districts. That data, which the Census Bureau will release Thursday, also is used to distribute \$1.5 trillion in federal spending each year.

The documents, made public in response to an open records request from a Republican redistricting advocacy group, don't shed much light on why questions were left unanswered, though theories abound. Some observers say software used in the first census in which most Americans could respond online allowed people to skip questions. Others say the pandemic made it harder to reach people who didn't respond.

Confusion over some questions, including traditional uncertainty among Hispanics about how to answer the race question, may have been a factor, but some experts hint at a more sinister possibility. They say the Trump administration's attempt to end the count early and failed efforts to put a citizenship question on the form and exclude people who were in the U.S. illegally had a chilling effect.

"I think it's the pandemic and Trump. The very threat that citizenship was on the questionnaire, the very notion it might have been on it, may have deterred some Latinos from filling it out," said Andrew Beveridge, a sociologist at Queens College and the City University of New York Graduate School and University Center. "I think a lot of us are flabbergasted by it. It is a very high number."

Ruggles initially thought it had to do with the software used by people who answered online — about two-thirds of U.S. households. Other countries such as Australia and Canada, which have used similar software for censuses, saw the number of unanswered questions drop to almost zero because respondents couldn't proceed if they didn't answer a question.

"I guess in the U.S. version they must just have accepted incomplete responses," Ruggles said. "If the non-response rate was consistently high across response mode, that is just strange."

Acting Census Bureau Director Ron Jarmin said recently in a blog post that the blank answers spanned all categories of questions and all modes of responding — online, by paper, by phone or face-to-face interviews.

"These blank responses left holes in the data which we had to fill," Jarmin said.

In a statement last week to The Associated Press, Jarmin declined to go into details, saying only that the bureau would release updated rates later this month "based on the correct numbers."

To fill in the holes, Census Bureau statisticians searched other administrative records such as tax forms,



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 57 of 68

Social Security card applications or previous censuses to find people's race, age, sex and Hispanic background.

If available records didn't turn up the information needed, they turned to the statistical technique called imputation that the Census Bureau has used for 60 years. The technique has been challenged and upheld in courts after past censuses.

In some cases, statisticians looked for information answered about one member of a family, such as race, and applied it to another member that had blank answers. Or they assigned a sex based on the respondent's first name. In other cases, when the entire household had no information, they filled it in using data of similar neighbors.

"Imputation has been shown to improve data quality and accuracy compared to leaving these fields blank, or without information from respondents," Census Bureau officials Roberto Ramirez and Christine Borman wrote recently in a blog post.

The Census Bureau in April released state population totals from the 2020 census. Those are used to divvy up the number of congressional seats in each state during a once-a-decade process known as apportionment.

The agency released a slide deck presentation about the high rate of unanswered questions, along with group housing records and the first details about the rate of non-responses, in response to an open records request from Fair Lines American Foundation. The Republican advocacy group sued the Census Bureau for information about how the count was conducted in dorms, prisons, nursing homes and other places where people live in groups. Fair Lines says it's concerned about the accuracy of the group housing count and wants to make sure anomalies didn't affect the state population figures.

With the information showing high rates of imputation, some Republican-controlled states may try to leave college students out of redistricting data, claiming they were also counted at their parents' homes, to get a partisan edge, said Jeffrey Wice, a Democratic redistricting expert.

"That will be hard to prove but would inject more uncertainty and possible delay into redistricting," Wice said.

## Mixed bag: Erratic Pandemic Olympics come to a nuanced end

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

TOKYO (AP) — It began with a virus and a yearlong pause. It ended with a typhoon blowing through and, still, a virus. In between: just about everything.

The Tokyo Olympics, christened with "2020" but held in mid-2021 after being interrupted for a year by the coronavirus, glided to their conclusion in a COVID-emptied stadium Sunday night as an often surreal mixed bag for Japan and for the world.

A rollicking closing ceremony with the theme "Worlds We Share" — an optimistic but ironic notion at this human moment — featured everything from stunt bikes to intricate light shows as it tried to convey a "celebratory and liberating atmosphere" for athletes after a tense two weeks. It pivoted to a live feed from Paris, host of the 2024 Summer Games. And with that, the strangest Olympic Games on record closed their books for good.

Held in the middle of a resurging pandemic, rejected by many Japanese and plagued by months of administrative problems, these Games presented logistical and medical obstacles like no other, offered up serious conversations about mental health — and, when it came to sport, delivered both triumphs and a few surprising shortfalls.

From the outset, expectations were middling at best, apocalyptic at worst. Even Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee, said he'd worried that these could "become the Olympic Games without a soul." But, he said, "what we have seen here is totally different."

"You were faster, you went higher, you were stronger because we all stood together — in solidarity," Bach told gathered Olympians as he closed the Games. "This was even more remarkable given the many challenges you had to face because of the pandemic. In these difficult times, you give the world the most precious of gifts: hope."

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 58 of 68

"For the first time since the pandemic began," he said, "the entire world came together."

He overstated it a bit. At these Games, even the word "together" was fraught. Spectators were kept at bay. A patchwork of rules kept athletes masked and apart for much of medal ceremonies, yet saw them swapping bodily fluids in some venues. That was less about being remiss than about being real: Risks that could be mitigated were, but at the same time events had to go on.

Athletes' perseverance became a central story. Mental health claimed bandwidth as never before, and athletes revealed their stories and struggles in vulnerable, sometimes excruciating fashion.

Japan's fourth Olympics, held 57 years after the 1964 Games reintroduced the country after its World War II defeat, represented a planet trying to come together at a moment in history when disease and circumstance and politics had splintered it apart.

The closing ceremony Sunday reflected that — and, at times, nudged the proceedings toward a sci-fi flavor. As athletes stood in the arena for the final pomp, digital scoreboards at either end of the stadium featured what organizers called a "fan video matrix," a Zoom call-like screen of videos uploaded by spectators showing themselves cheering at home.

Even the parade of athletes carrying national flags — thousands of Olympians, masked and unmasked, clustering together before fanning out into the world again — was affected. Volunteers carried some flags into the stadium, presumably because of rules requiring athletes to leave the country shortly after their events concluded.

In front of such formidable backdrops, athletic excellence burst through, from the Games' first gold medal (China's Yang Qian in the 10-meter air rifle on July 24) to their last (Serbia defeating Greece in men's water polo on Sunday afternoon).

Among the highlights: Allyson Felix taking a U.S.-record 11th medal in track, then stepping away from the Olympic stage. American quintuple gold medalist Caeleb Dressel's astounding performance in the pool. The emergence of surfing, skateboarding and sport climbing as popular, and viable, Olympic sports. Host country Japan's medal haul — 58, its most ever.

Any Olympics is a microcosm of the world it reflects. These Games' runup, and the two weeks of the Games themselves, featured tens of thousands of spit-in-a-vial COVID tests for athletes, staff, journalists and visitors. That produced barely more than 400 positives, a far cry from the rest of non-Olympic bubble Japan, where surges in positive cases provoked the government to declare increasingly widespread states of emergency.

And, of course, there was that other microcosm of human life that the Games revealed — the reckoning with mental and emotional health, and the pressure put on top-tier athletes to compete hard and succeed at almost any cost. The interruption of that pressurized narrative, led by the struggles of gymnast Simone Biles and tennis player Naomi Osaka in particular, permeated these Games and ignited the spark of an athlete-driven conversation about stress, tolerance and inclusivity that everyone expects to continue.

While Tokyo is handing off the Summer Games baton to Paris for 2024, the delay has effectively crammed two Olympics together. The next Winter Games convenes in just six months in another major Asian metropolis — Beijing, Japan's rival in East Asia and home to a much more authoritarian government that is expected to administer its Games in a more draconian and restrictive way, virus or no virus.

Beyond that, Paris organizers promised Sunday to "take sport out of its traditional spaces" and "connect with new audiences in new ways" in 2024 — presuming, of course, the absence of a protracted pandemic. They went live from the closing to excited groups of fans clustered near the Eiffel Tower, a crowded public scene that Tokyo didn't allow.

In recent weeks, lots of people — officials, athletes, journalists — have been chewing over how these Tokyo Games will be remembered. That's up to history, of course, but there are hints.

The runup was messy and disputed. The days of competition were fraught but, in general, without incident other than sporting milestones. Even a moderate earthquake rumbled through and was quickly forgotten. Scattered protests of the Games — including one outside the stadium Sunday night — reflected a portion of Japan's sentiment, though certainly not all. The expenses — upwards of \$15 billion — were

colossal and will echo in Tokyo long after athletes are gone.

What are the Olympic Games supposed to be? A politics-free sporting event, as the IOC insists? A bonanza for sponsors and broadcasters? One small step toward world peace? Despite all the yarn-spinning, their identity remains up in the air and that fundamental question remains.

But as the cauldron was snuffed out Sunday night after the Pandemic Olympics concluded, it's easy to argue that Tokyo can take its place as a Games that didn't fail — as one that overcame a lot to even happen at all. And as vaccines roll out, variants emerge and lockdowns re-emerge, another city and government — Beijing, the Chinese capital — must grapple with the very same question.

In the meantime, the program for Tokyo's closing ceremony, outlining its "Worlds We Share" theme, captured the effect of the pandemic and the virtual worlds and separation anxiety to which it has given birth.

"We are in a new normal, and this edition of the Games were a different affair," it said. "Even if we cannot be together, we can share the same moment. And that is something that we will never forget."

## Olympic Latest: Bach declares Tokyo Olympics officially over

TOKYO (AP) — The Latest on the Tokyo Olympics, which are taking place under heavy restrictions after a year's delay because of the coronavirus pandemic:

---

The Tokyo Olympics are officially over.

IOC President Thomas Bach declared the Games closed after the French flag was raised inside Olympic Stadium for the transition to Paris 2024. After a short performance in the stadium, the cauldron closed around the Olympic flame, extinguishing it.

The ceremony included a ska band on a stage with people dancing, juggling and soccer players moving around an elevated stage in the center of the stadium.

Medals for the marathon were presented — an Olympic tradition — followed by traditional Japanese dances inside the stadium and on the videoboard.

An opera singer performed during the International Olympic Committee anthem, then the transition to Paris 2024 that included a flyover in front of thousands of fans in front of the Eiffel Tower.

---

Thousands of people, including medalists who have returned from Tokyo, gathered near the Eiffel Tower to welcome the handover of the Olympic flag to Paris, which will host the Games in 2024.

A flyover by jets from the Patrouille de France ("Patrol of France") released blue, white and red smoke — the colors of the French flag — in the sky of the capital.

French President Emmanuel Macron was filmed on the top floor of the Eiffel Tower saying the Olympic slogan "higher, faster, stronger" and adding: "Together."

Organizers planned to unfurl a football-field sized flag with the emblem of Paris 2024 from atop the tower but opted against it due to windy weather.

The event took place during the Tokyo Games closing ceremony, after the Olympic flag was formally handed over to Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo.

It was followed by a concert performed by French artist Woodkid at the foot of the Eiffel Tower.

Paris will organize the Games 100 years after last hosting the Olympics in 1924.

---

The athletes are inside the Olympic Stadium for the closing ceremony of the Tokyo Games.

They entered the stadium from the corners after their countries' flags were carried in and formed into a circle at the center.

Many marched in holding phones to capture the moment or waved mini flags. Nearly all were wiping sweat off their brows in another humid Tokyo summer night.

The evening started with the raising of the Japanese flag as the Olympic cauldron burned in the corner of the stadium.

---

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 60 of 68

The curtain is about to close on the Pandemic Olympics.

The 2020 Tokyo Games — held in 2021 — will come to an end with the closing ceremonies. Just like most of the competitions, it will go off without fans in the stands.

Olympic Stadium was empty except for a few hundred media, Olympics officials and volunteers as the cauldron burned at one end. The athletes lined up in folding chairs outside the stadium, not far from a small group of protestors who were surrounded by police.

The rain from a passing tropical storm stopped in the evening, replaced by heavy humidity that has draped over these Games.

## MEDAL ALERT

Filip Filipovic and Serbia have won their second straight gold medal in men's water polo, beating Greece 13-10 in the final event of the Tokyo Olympics.

Nikola Jaksic scored three goals on three shots and Filipovic made several big plays as Serbia earned its fourth straight win since it lost to Croatia in group play. Serbia finished third in Group B, but it raised its game to another level when the quarterfinals rolled around — just like it did when it won gold in 2016.

Filipovic's tiebreaking goal with 26 seconds remaining lifted Serbia to a dramatic 10-9 victory over Spain in the semis.

Serbia became the first country to repeat as Olympic champion since Hungary won three in a row from 2000 to 2008. It earned its fourth medal in its fourth appearance in the Olympics' oldest team sport.

Dimitrios Skoumpakis, captain Ioannis Fountoulis and Angelos Vlachopoulos scored two goals apiece for Greece, which earned its first medal in men's water polo. Its previous best finish was fourth in 2004.

Greece also matched the country's best result in a team sport at the Olympics, joining a silver medal in women's water polo at the Athens Games.

## MEDAL ALERT

France has beaten the Russian Olympic Committee 30-25 for the gold medal in women's handball.

Scores were level at 16-16 midway through the second half before six straight goals for France and a string of saves by goalkeeper Cleopatre Darleux took the game out of the Russians' reach.

France's Pauletta Foppa and Allison Pineau had seven goals each, and so did Russian player Polina Vedkhina.

France also won the men's tournament in Saturday's final against Denmark and becomes the first country to win both handball events at the same Olympics since Yugoslavia in 1984.

Norway matched its women's bronze from 2016 with a commanding 36-19 win over Sweden on eight goals each from Nora Mork and Kari Brattset Dale.

## MEDAL ALERT

Bakhodir Jalolov of Uzbekistan has won gold at super heavyweight in the final boxing match of the Tokyo Olympics, dominating a 5:0 victory over Richard Torrez Jr. of the United States.

The 6-foot-7 Jalolov towered over nearly every other fighter in the Olympic sport's largest weight class, yet he also has the stiff jab of a much smaller man. He dominated all four of his bouts in Tokyo, sweeping every judge's decision in three fights and winning by stoppage in the semifinals.

Jalolov is an 8-0 professional boxer who lives in California and fights mostly in North America. He became the most experienced pro to win gold in the second Olympics after professionals were allowed to qualify.

He also won the only boxing medal in Tokyo for the disappointing Uzbek team, which sent 11 fighters to Tokyo after topping the medal table in Rio de Janeiro.

Torrez claimed the third silver for the U.S., which had its most successful Olympics since 2000 in terms of total medals. The Americans are the most successful boxing nation in Olympic history, but they haven't won a men's gold medal since 2004.

Frazer Clarke of Britain and Kamshybek Kunkabayev won super heavyweight bronze.

## \_\_\_\_ MEDAL ALERT

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 61 of 68

Lauren Price of Britain has won gold in the women's middleweight division, beating China's Li Qian 5:0 in a one-sided bout.

Price claimed Britain's second gold medal and sixth medal overall in Tokyo with a solid performance against Li. Price is the first woman to win gold at middleweight after Claressa Shields, the American two-time champion.

Nouchka Fontijn of the Netherlands and Zemfira Magomedalieva won bronze.

## MEDAL ALERT

The United States won its first Olympic gold medal ever in women's volleyball by beating Brazil in straight sets.

The U.S. had won silver three times and bronze twice previously for the most medals by any country that hadn't won gold. But the Americans finally completed that quest by beating the country that denied them gold in the final match in both 2008 and 2012.

The victory allowed U.S. coach Karch Kiraly to join China's Lang Ping as the second person to win gold as a player in volleyball and then lead a country to gold as coach. Kiraly won gold indoor as a player in 1984 and '88. He also won gold in beach volleyball in 1996.

Serbia beat South Korea for the bronze medal.

## MEDAL ALERT

Hungary has won the bronze medal in men's water polo, topping Spain 9-5 at the Tokyo Olympics.

Marton Vamos scored two goals and Viktor Nagy made eight saves as Hungary rebounded from a disappointing 9-6 loss to Greece in the semifinals.

Hungary is the winningest program in men's water polo with nine golds, but the bronze in Tokyo was its first medal since its run of three straight Olympic titles from 2000 to 2008. It finished fifth in London and Rio de Janeiro.

Hungary's women's water polo team also won bronze, beating the Russian team 11-9 on Saturday.

Spain dropped its last two games in Tokyo after opening with six straight wins. It lost 10-9 to Serbia on Friday night on Filip Filipovic's tiebreaking goal with 26 seconds left.

Alberto Munarriz Egana scored two goals for Spain, and Daniel Lopez Pinedo had eight saves.

Serbia plays Greece for gold later Sunday.

## MEDAL ALERT

Andy Cruz has won Cuba's fourth boxing gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics, beating U.S. lightweight Keyshawn Davis 4:1 in the final at the Kokugikan Arena.

Cruz beat Davis for the fourth consecutive time in their amateur careers, but he had to rally with an impressive third round after Davis swept the second on all five judges' cards.

Cruz and Davis both showed off the hand speed and athleticism that made them two of the most impressive fighters in Tokyo, but Cruz's technical skills impressed the judges.

Cruz joined two-time Olympic gold medalists Roniel Iglesias, Arlen Lopez and Julio Cesar La Cruz with championships in Tokyo.

The American team has just one shot left to end its 17-year men's gold medal drought when super heavyweight Richard Torrez Jr. fights Uzbekistan's Bakhodir Jalolov in the final bout of the Olympics.

Armenia's Hovhannes Bachkov and Australia's Harry Garside won lightweight bronze.

## MEDAL ALERT

Kellie Anne Harrington of Ireland has won gold in the women's lightweight division, beating Beatriz Ferreira of Brazil 5:0 in a close bout at the Kokugikan Arena.

Harrington is a 31-year-old career amateur who spent the past half-decade waiting for her shot to follow in the footsteps of Katie Taylor, who won gold for Ireland at the inaugural women's Olympic boxing

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 62 of 68

tournament in London.

Harrington's technical precision contrasted sharply with Ferreira's aggressive, exciting style. Harrington swept the third round on all five judges' cards to win.

Finland's Mira Potkonen and Thailand's Sudaporn Seesondee won bronze.

Bahraini runner Sadik Mikhou has tested positive for a blood transfusion at the Tokyo Olympics and has been provisionally suspended.

The Moroccan-born Mikhou ran in the 1,500-meter heats on Tuesday but did not advance to the final.

The International Testing Agency says the suspected doping violation was reported on Friday.

Mikhou was previously banned for blood doping but his suspension expired in December.

The IOC has given itself more power to remove sports from the Olympic program.

The decision voted in by International Olympic Committee members comes during prolonged issues with the leadership of weightlifting and boxing.

The IOC can now remove a sport if its governing body does not comply with a decision made by the Olympic body's executive board or if it "acts in a manner likely to tarnish the reputation of the Olympic movement."

Weightlifting could lose its place at the 2024 Paris Olympics because of long-term doping problems and governance issues. The International Weightlifting Federation was led for two decades until last year by longtime IOC member Tamas Ajan.

Boxing at the Tokyo Games was taken out of the International Boxing Association's control in 2019 after doubts about the integrity of Olympic bouts and IOC concerns about its presidential elections.

## MEDAL ALERT

The Russian rhythmic gymnastics juggernaut collapsed in Tokyo, with the country's team losing the gold medal to Bulgaria a day after losing the individual competition to Israel.

Russia claimed silver medals in both.

Russia has been dominant in the sports for decades. It has won gold medals in both the group and individual competitions in every Olympics since 2000, but the winning streak ended this year.

Linoy Ashram of Israel won gold in the individual competition Saturday, edging out a pair of Russian identical twins who were the favorites heading into Tokyo.

On Sunday, Bulgaria's five-woman team won gold by beating the Russians in the group final, a two-part competition beginning with routines where performers dance with balls, followed by a set of hoops and clubs. Italy placed third.

## MEDAL ALERT

Jennifer Valente got up from a crash in the omnium-ending points race to hang on for the gold medal, capping what had been an otherwise frustrating and disappointing Olympics for American cycling.

Valente won the opening scratch race, picked up three sprints in the points race and performed well in the elimination race to take an eight-point lead into the points race, where points are awarded for sprints every 10 laps.

Valente won the first sprint to pad her lead, then got up from a crash with 30 laps left to keep from losing any ground on her pursuers. She wound up taking second in the final sprint to secure the gold medal.

Yumi Kajihara took silver for Japan. Kirsten Wild earned bronze for the Netherlands.

## MEDAL ALERT

Brittney Griner scored 30 points, and the United States won its seventh straight gold medal in women's basketball, beating Japan 90-75.

Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi have been part of five of those gold medals. Nobody has played more Olympic games for the U.S. than Taurasi with 38. Bird is second with 36 in her final Olympics.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 63 of 68

This golden streak started in 1996 in Atlanta with Dawn Staley a player. Staley joins the late Anne Donovan as the only Americans to help the U.S. win gold as players, assistants and then head coaches.

A'ja Wilson added 19 points and Breanna Stewart scored 14 as the Americans dominated inside again. The U.S. extended its Olympic winning streak to 55 consecutive games dating to the 1992 bronze medal game.

Japan finished with the silver in the host nation's first appearance in the medal round. Japan finished eighth at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

World Athletics president Sebastian Coe says it's "inevitable" that questions will be asked about the integrity of breakthrough track and field results at the Tokyo Olympics.

Coe was asked at a news conference if it was frustrating that some doubted whether the surprise win by men's 100-meter champion Marcell Jacobs had been clean.

Italian and British media reported that Jacobs cut ties this year with a nutritionist who was linked to a police investigation of steroid distribution.

Coe said he would not speak about a specific case, though he acknowledged that after "performances that are outstanding, it is inevitable people will always ask questions."

The two-time 1,500-meter gold medalist says: "Am I surprised about anything in athletics? Not really."

He suggests people doubted his own rapid career progress from a "relatively modest athlete" in 1978 to an Olympic champion two years later.

Megan Rapinoe says she's enjoying the greatest gift she doesn't deserve: being able to stick around and watch fiancée Sue Bird play for a fifth Olympic gold medal.

Rapinoe finished up her Olympic commitment Thursday night when the U.S. won bronze in women's soccer, with Rapinoe scoring twice in the win. Athletes return home quickly after their final competition under coronavirus pandemic protocols at the Tokyo Games.

Rapinoe says she's thankful that someone arranged for her to be a few rows off courtside, able to support and watch Bird, knowing this will be her last Olympics. Rapinoe says she feels "super lucky" to be able to attend the game because of all the restrictions.

The U.S. men and their coach, Gregg Popovich, also are in the stands watching the American women play for their seventh consecutive gold medal. The U.S. men won gold Saturday. The teams are flying home on the same plane.

## MEDAL ALERT

Jason Kenny has become Britain's most decorated Olympian by defending his gold medal in the keirin. That gave Kenny seven golds to break a tie with cyclist Chris Hoy and nine overall to break a tie with Bradley Wiggins.

Azizulhasni Awang of Malaysia outsprinted Dutch rider Harrie Lavreysen for the silver medal.

Kenny slotted in behind the motorized pacing bike for the first three laps, then began sprinting the moment it ducked off the track. Nobody reacted to his audacious flyer, and that allowed Kenny to build nearly a quarter-lap lead.

He held it all the way to the finish, raising his arms in triumph after crossing the line.

## MEDAL ALERT

Kelsey Mitchell of Canada has won gold in the women's sprint event in track cycling, sweeping past Olena Starikova of Ukraine at the Izu Velodrome.

Mitchell upset reigning world champion Emma Hinze of Germany in the semifinals before facing off with Starikova, who likewise had upset 2019 world champion Lee Wai Sze of Hong Kong in her semifinal match.

Mitchell led wire-to-wire against Starikova in the first of their best-of-three final. Then, she held Starikova off in a drag race to the finish to win Canada's second gold in the event after Lori-Ann Muenzer's at the 2004 Athens Games.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 64 of 68

Lee easily swept past Hinze to win the bronze medal.

An on-track official has been removed from the track inside the Izu Velodrome on a stretcher after he was knocked over by a rider during a massive crash near the end of the scratch race in the women's omnium.

The official, who has not been identified, was standing on the track apron near the first turn when Elisa Balsamo of Italy hit Emily Kay of Ireland as they took the bell for the final lap. Both went down, and that set off a chain reaction that took down five more riders, including two-time defending champion Laura Kenny.

The rider from Egypt, Ebtissam Zayed Ahmed, rode right over Balsamo and into the track official.

Serbia is going home with an Olympic medal in women's volleyball for the second straight Games.

The Serbians beat South Korea in straight sets to win the bronze medal in Tokyo. Serbia won its first medal in the sport five years ago, a silver in Rio de Janeiro.

South Korea fell short in its quest for a second women's volleyball medal after winning bronze in 1976.

The United States is taking on Brazil for the gold medal.

## MEDAL ALERT

Eliud Kipchoge pulled away late and no one could come close to catching him as the 36-year-old from Kenya defended his Olympic marathon title.

Kipchoge finished in 2 hours, 8 minutes, 38 seconds on a breezy and humid Sunday along the streets of Sapporo. It was more than 80 seconds ahead of runner-up Abdi Nageeye of the Netherlands. Bashir Abdi of Belgium earned bronze to close out the track and field portion of the Tokyo Games.

On a day with plenty of cloud cover, Kipchoge cruised. The temperature was around 77 degrees Fahrenheit (25 Celsius) at the start and climbed to 84 (29). The men's race kept with its original start time a day after the women's race was moved up an hour to avoid the heat.

Humidity was at 81% as the runners wound their way through Sapporo, which is located about 500 miles (about 830 kilometers) north of Tokyo. The race was moved to escape the extreme heat, but it was about the same temperature Sunday in Tokyo — and rainy.

Kipchoge smiled along the way and even fist-bumped a fellow racer. Kipchoge becomes the third athlete to win multiple gold medals in the men's marathon, joining Abebe Bikila (1960, '64) and Waldemar Cierpinski ('76, '80).

## Zuckerberg's cash fuels GOP suspicion and new election rules

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — When Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg donated \$400 million to help fund election offices as they scrambled to deal with the coronavirus pandemic late last summer, he said he hoped he would never have to do it again.

Republican legislatures are granting him that wish.

At least eight GOP-controlled states have passed bans on donations to election offices this year as Republicans try to block outside funding of voting operations. The legislation often comes as part of Republican packages that also put new limits on how voters can cast ballots and impose new requirements on county or city-based election officials.

The response is spurred by anger and suspicion on the right that Zuckerberg's money benefited Democrats in 2020. Conservatives have long accused the tech mogul's social media platform of censoring right-wing voices as part of its campaign against misinformation.

Zuckerberg's money was largely distributed through a nonpartisan foundation that had liberal roots. Conservative groups cite analyses that the money went disproportionately to Democratic-leaning counties in key states such as Florida and Pennsylvania.

"People saw that, and looked around, and they were increasingly concerned about why would you have a billionaire funding our elections through the backdoor," said Jessica Anderson, executive director of the



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 65 of 68

conservative group Heritage Action, which has pushed the bans in several states.

But many election officials say that effort is short-sighted and fueled by paranoia. Election offices, they argue, are chronically underfunded and now cannot benefit from donations that still flow to so many other branches of government, including police, schools and libraries.

Furthermore, they say there is no sign of favoritism in the distribution of the grants from Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan. Elections are more expensive in populous urban areas, and especially more so last year, when states scrambled to shift to mail voting to deal with the pandemic. Metro areas had to buy expensive equipment to open and sort mail ballots, a task that smaller, more GOP-leaning counties could do by hand or with less gear.

Also, Republican-leaning areas were already discouraged from accepting election grants due to conservative suspicion of Zuckerberg. The Republican attorney general of Louisiana last year ordered his state's election offices to turn down grants from the nonprofit, the Center for Tech and Civic Life, which distributed \$350 million of the Zuckerberg money.

"Every election department that applied, received funding," said CTCL's executive director, Tiana Epps-Johnson, adding that the distribution of the money "reflects those who chose to apply."

A spokesman for Zuckerberg declined to address the wave of new legislation.

"When our nation's election infrastructure faced unprecedented challenges last year due to the pandemic, Mark and Priscilla stepped up to close a funding gap and granted \$350 million to the Center for Tech and Civic Life, a nonpartisan, 501 (c)(3) organization," said Ben LaBolt. "Mark made clear this was a unique effort to address the unprecedented challenge of the pandemic and his preference for elections to be publicly funded."

The center distributed grants to 2,500 election offices nationwide, from Alaska to Florida. The money was spent in a wide variety of ways — protective gear for poll workers, public education campaigns promoting new methods to vote during the pandemic, and new trucks to haul voting equipment.

In northern Arizona, sprawling Coconino County used its \$614,000 grant to hire more election workers, particularly Navajo speakers who could do outreach on a reservation, and set up drive-up sites for voters to drop off ballots, said county recorder Patty Hansen.

She said it was the first time she had enough money to expand outreach to the entire county, which is among the biggest in land size in the country at 18,600 square miles but is sparsely populated.

"Because of the legislation passed and signed by the governor, we will never be able to get a grant like that ever again," she said. "They're cutting off a funding source to be able to provide these additional requirements they're putting on us."

Election officials have long complained they were underfunded, but never more so than last year when they had to instantly revamp their entire operations at the peak of the pandemic. There was a huge shift to mail voting, while even in-person voting required new protective measures, and hazard pay for poll workers.

Democrats pushed for an extra \$2 billion for election offices in the initial coronavirus aid bill in April but only got \$400 million. After a spring and summer of troubled primaries and partisan deadlock over more funding, Zuckerberg stepped in. He and Chan donated a total of \$400 million to election offices — \$350 million in the form of grants to local offices that were distributed through CTCL.

The selection of CTCL raised eyebrows among some conservatives because of the group's roots. Some of its founders, including Epps-Johnson, once were at the New Organizing Institute, which provided data and training to liberal activists. Still, CTCL has become respected among election officials and includes a Republican, Pam Anderson, former elected clerk of a suburban Denver-area county, on its board. In an interview, she said the group was "100% nonpartisan."

Other Republican election officials have also vouched for the impartiality of the program. "I don't see why governments should be barred from trying to work with the private sector in securing grant funds," said Brian Mead, a Republican election director in Licking County, Ohio, outside Columbus, which received \$77,000 from CTCL. "If we can work with the private sector and secure funds where we save our taxpayers money, I think that's a good thing," Mead said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 66 of 68

That did not mollify conservatives, especially after the initial grants went to major, Democratic-voting cities. In Pennsylvania, one of the central battlegrounds of the presidential election, Philadelphia, with an annual election budget of \$12.3 million, received \$10 million from CTCL. The conservative Foundation for Government Accountability found that in Pennsylvania, Democratic-voting counties received an average of \$4.99 per voter, while Republican-voting ones got \$1.12 per voter.

In Florida, the differential was also dramatic, with one-third of the \$18 million in total money going to Democratic-leaning Palm Beach County, and an additional \$2.4 million for Miami-Dade County, which backed Democrat Joe Biden, albeit more narrowly than expected. Republican Donald Trump won the state.

"If Charles Koch was doing this, well, for many of these people the shoe would be on the other foot," said Hayden Dublois, a researcher at the Foundation for Government Accountability, referring to the conservative billionaire.

In some states, including Georgia and Texas, the new laws require all donations to local election offices to be distributed by the secretary of state. In states such as Arizona, Kansas and Iowa, they are banned altogether.

Anderson, the Republican CTCL board member, said that will do real damage.

"If you want to block this funding, then I want to ask if the legislators are funding elections?" Anderson said. "Because so many states don't."

## Japan has its best Olympic medal haul: 27 gold, 58 overall

By STEPHEN WADE AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Despite the pandemic, the one-year delay and the soaring costs, the Japanese public may still find a sweet spot for the Tokyo Olympics, the way it did for the storied 1964 Games.

Why? A historic haul of medals.

Japan had its best Olympic production in every category: the most gold medals (27), the most overall (58), and a third-place finish in gold medals behind two much larger countries — the United States and China.

"Japan's national team was able to make its own record result this time," deputy delegation head Mitsugi Ogata said Sunday as the Olympics ended. "We don't want this to be like disappearing fireworks. We think it is important that we keep this momentum going through Paris 2024, and Los Angeles 2028."

The previous best in gold was 16, both in 1964 and at the 2004 Athens Games. The country won only 12 gold medals five years ago in Rio de Janeiro.

The United States won 39 gold medals — one more than China — and was way ahead in the overall medal standings with 113 compared to 88 for China. The Russian Olympic Committee had 71 overall medals followed by Britain with 65. Japan was fifth.

Home countries always get a medal bump, usually by investing more time and money than they would ordinarily. With no fans, some of that home-field advantage was lost. Still, Japan made up for the lack of fans by winning medals in the five sports added to this year's Olympic program: baseball-softball, sports climbing, karate, surfing and skateboarding.

Each Olympic host gets to add a few sports. Paris will have breakdancing, surfing, karate, and sports climbing.

Japan won gold in both baseball and softball — beating the United States both times in the final — added three gold medals in skateboarding, and another gold in karate. Of its 58 overall medals, 14 came in the sports added for Tokyo.

Atsunori Inaba, the manager of Japan's winning baseball team, said the gold medal might get more children playing. Though very popular in Japan, baseball participation numbers are down.

"I hope this gold will contribute to increasing the number of both children and adults who want to start playing baseball," Atsunori said.

Japan's goal before the pandemic was 30 gold medals. But officials backed off that target in the last several months as it became more difficult during the pandemic to predict Japan's performance, as well as forecast how other countries would perform.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 67 of 68

"Originally we had a goal of winning 30 gold medals." Ogata said. "Although we were not able to achieve that goal, the number of gold medals, total medals, are all historic highs."

Japan got off on the right foot on the first day of the Olympics — in judo, of course. Judo is the only Olympic sport with roots in Japan, and the country's athletes won nine gold medals, two silver and one bronze.

In the first judo final, Funa Tonaki earned silver in the women's 48-kilogram class. It was Japan's 500th Olympic medal — winter and summer — followed by a gold medal from Naohisa Takato in the men's 60-kilogram final.

That helped get the ball rolling, catching a public's attention that had been distracted by rising COVID-19 cases and uncertainty about the Olympics even taking place.

Among the successes, Japan won five gold medals in wrestling — four by women — and upset China for gold in table tennis in mixed doubles.

It even reached the gold-medal final against the United States in women's basketball, losing 90-75. It was Japan's first medal in women's basketball, a team coached by American Tom Hovasse.

Tsuyoshi Fukui, the head of the Japanese delegation, confirmed Sunday that gold medalists would receive 5 million yen — about \$45,000. Silver is worth 2 million (about \$18,000), with 1 million (about \$9,000) for bronze.

It will be large payday.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Aug. 9, the 221st day of 2021. There are 144 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 9, 1945, three days after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, a U.S. B-29 Superfortress code-named Bockscar dropped a nuclear device ("Fat Man") over Nagasaki, killing an estimated 74,000 people.

On this date:

In 1910, the U.S. Patent Office granted Alva J. Fisher of the Hurley Machine Co. a patent for an electrically powered washing machine.

In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order nationalizing silver.

In 1936, Jesse Owens won his fourth gold medal at the Berlin Olympics as the United States took first place in the 400-meter relay.

In 1942, British authorities in India arrested nationalist Mohandas K. Gandhi; he was released in 1944.

In 1944, 258 African-American sailors based at Port Chicago, California, refused to load a munitions ship following a cargo vessel explosion that killed 320 men, many of them Black. (Fifty of the sailors were convicted of mutiny, fined and imprisoned.)

In 1969, actor Sharon Tate and four other people were found brutally slain at Tate's Los Angeles home; cult leader Charles Manson and a group of his followers were later convicted of the crime.

In 1974, Vice President Gerald R. Ford became the nation's 38th chief executive as President Richard Nixon's resignation took effect.

In 1982, a federal judge in Washington ordered John W. Hinckley Jr., who'd been acquitted of shooting President Ronald Reagan and three others by reason of insanity, committed to a mental hospital.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan nominated Lauro Cavazos (kah-VAH'-zohs) to be secretary of education; Cavazos became the first Hispanic to serve in the Cabinet.

In 1992, closing ceremonies were held for the Barcelona Summer Olympics, with the Unified Team of former Soviet republics winning 112 medals, the United States 108.

In 2004, Oklahoma City bombing conspirator Terry Nichols, addressing a court for the first time, asked victims of the blast for forgiveness as a judge sentenced him to 161 consecutive life sentences.

In 2014, Michael Brown Jr., an 18-year-old Black man, was shot to death by a police officer following an

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Aug. 09, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 033 ~ 68 of 68

altercation in Ferguson, Missouri; Brown's death led to sometimes-violent protests in Ferguson and other U.S. cities, spawning a national "Black Lives Matter" movement.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama announced new fuel efficiency standards for work trucks, buses and other heavy duty vehicles. Polygamist leader Warren Jeffs was sentenced in San Angelo, Texas, to life in prison for sexually assaulting one of his child brides, and received the maximum 20-year punishment for a separate child sex conviction.

Five years ago: House Speaker Paul Ryan defeated Paul Nehlen, a longshot Republican challenger praised by Donald Trump, in a Wisconsin congressional primary. At the Rio Games, Michael Phelps earned the 20th and 21st Olympic gold medals of his career as he won the 200-meter butterfly and anchored the United States to victory in the 4x200 freestyle relay. Katie Ledecky earned her second gold in Rio by winning the 200-meter freestyle. The U.S. women's gymnastics team won gold for a second consecutive Olympics.

One year ago: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the United States reached 5 million, the highest of any country. Collin Morikawa closed with a 6-under-par 64 to win the PGA Championship in San Francisco, the first major golf tournament held without spectators.

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Famer Bob Cousy is 93. Actor Cynthia Harris is 87. Tennis Hall of Famer Rod Laver is 83. Jazz musician Jack DeJohnette is 79. Comedian-director David Steinberg is 79. Actor Sam Elliott is 77. Singer Barbara Mason is 74. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player John Cappelletti is 69. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Doug Williams is 66. Actor Melanie Griffith is 64. Actor Amanda Bearse is 63. Rapper Kurtis Blow is 62. Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan., is 61. Hockey Hall of Famer Brett Hull is 57. TV host Hoda Kotb (HOH'-duh KAHT'-bee) is 57. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Deion Sanders is 54. Actor Gillian Anderson is 53. Actor Eric Bana is 53. Producer-director McG (aka Joseph McGinty Nichol) is 53. NHL player-turned-coach Rod Brind'Amour is 51. TV anchor Chris Cuomo is 51. Actor Thomas Lennon is 51. Rapper Mack 10 is 50. Actor Nikki Schieler Ziering is 50. Latin rock singer Juanes is 49. Actor Liz Vassey is 49. Actor Kevin McKidd is 48. Actor Rhona Mitra (ROH'-nuh MEE'-truh) is 46. Actor Texas Battle is 45. Actor Jessica Capshaw is 45. Actor Ashley Johnson is 38. Actor Anna Kendrick is 36.