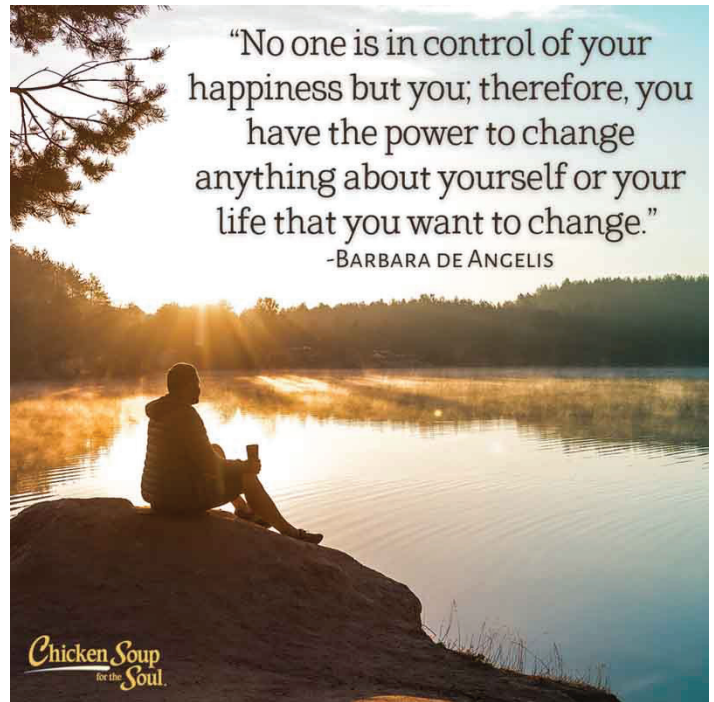


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## Tea Area wins both games on Saturday

Tea Area handed the Lady Tigers soccer team its first loss of the season Saturday with a 3-0 win. The game was played in Groton.

Groton Area struggled throughout the game as the ball was mostly on Groton's end of the field. Tea Area had 20 attempts at the goal with three of them going in. Groton Area only had three attempts at the goal.

Tea Area scored first with 22:35 left in the first half when Sydney Sherwood would score. Kaitlin Kuhnert would score for Tea Area with 33:29 left in the game and Sherwood would follow up with the third goal with 2:45 left in the game.

The boys team lost to Tea Area and the game was called with 20 minutes left in the game as the score was 11-0. Tea Area spread out the offense forcing Groton Area to run more and it opened up the net. Groton Area had about four attempts at the goal while Tea Area had about 35 attempts at the goal.

Ryan Del Monaco scored four goals and had one assist to Jonathan Howe who scored. Ivan Zamora scored twice and adding one goal each were Alex Pies, Connor Eimers, Carson Hall and Peyton Edmonds.

The boys will travel to James Valley Christian on Thursday and the girls will host West Central on Friday.



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

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

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## United Methodist Church

Groton and Conde

### Sunday, September 5, 2021

Conde Worship 9:00 AM

Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Monday, September 6, 2021

### Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Bible Study 10:00 AM

### Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Community Coffee Hour 9:30 AM

UMYF begins 7:00 PM

### Sunday, September 12, 2021

Grandparent's Day

Conde Worship 9:00 AM

Rally Sunday Carnival 10:00 AM

Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Rally Sunday Meal bring salad or dessert to pass -

All Welcome 12:00 PM

## Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

### Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021

9 a.m.: Worship/Communion/

### Monday, Sept. 6, 2021

6:30 a.m.: Bible Study

### Wednesday, Sept. 8

6 p.m.: Confirmation info. Meeting w/parents for 7-8 graders.

7:30 p.m.: for 9th graders

### Sunday, Sept. 12, 2021

9 a.m.: Worship

"God's Work Our Hands"

7 p.m.: Choir practice

## St. Elizabeth Ann Seton &

## St. Joseph Catholic

Groton and Turton

### Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30pm Groton

Sunday 8:30am Groton & 11:00am Turton

Weekday

Tues 5:00pm Turton, W-F 8:30am Groton

Sat 10am Newman Center

Confessions:

Sat. 3:45-4:15pm & Sun. 7:45am to 8:15am (G)

Sun. 10:30-10:45am (T)

## St. John's Lutheran Church

Groton

### Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021

Holy Communion Sunday

8 a.m.: Bible Study

9 a.m.: St. John's Worship

11 a.m.: Zion's Worship

### Tuesday, Sept. 7, 2021

1 p.m.: Ladies Aid LWML

### Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021

3:45 p.m.: Confirmation

### Sunday, Sept. 12, 2021

8 a.m.: Bible Study

9 a.m.: St. John's Worship

11 a.m.: Zion's Worship

To submit your monthly or weekly church calendar, email to  
[news@grotonsd.net](mailto:news@grotonsd.net)

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## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



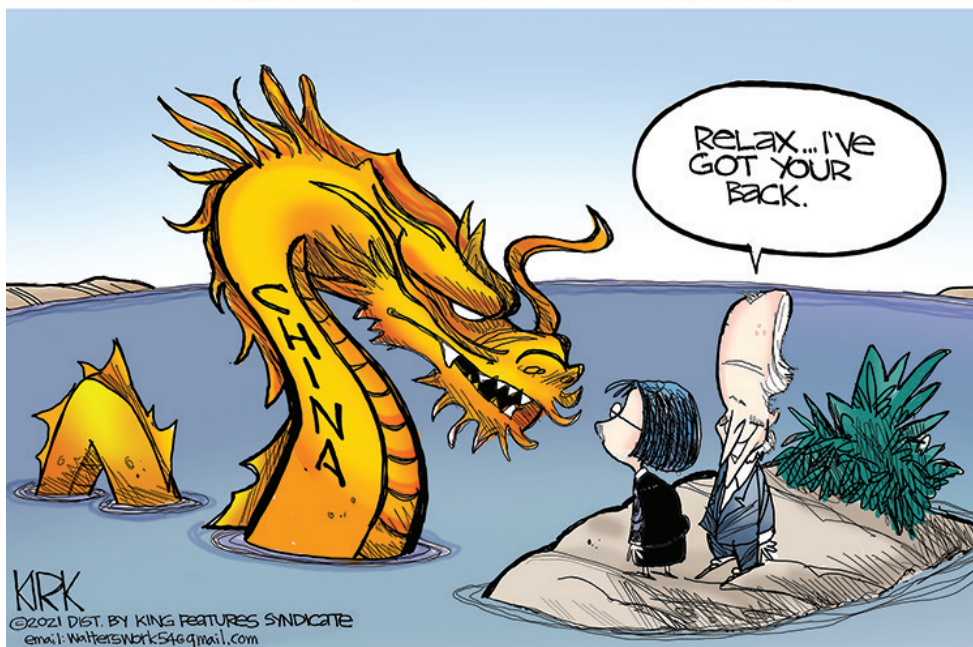
Detail of "The Second Day of the Creation" by M. C. Escher, 1925

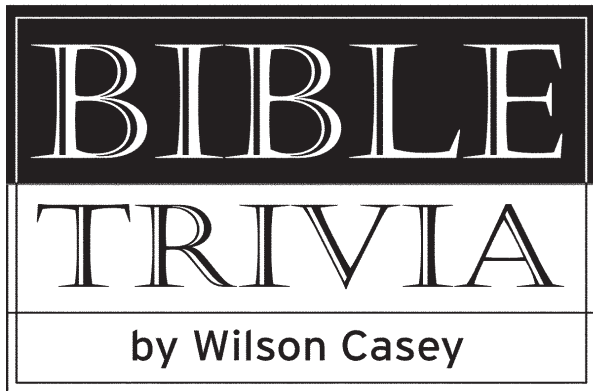
*Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.*

🌀 GENESIS 1: 7, 8 🌀

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### TAIWAN'S WORST-CASE SCENARIO





1. Is the book of Joel in the Old Testament or New Testament or neither?

2. What was the Lord's answer when Peter asked, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him"?  
*Once, Thrice, Seven, 70 times seven*

3. What's the only book of the Bible (KJV) in which the name of God is not mentioned? *Ruth, Ezra, Esther, Amos*

4. From Judges 14, what man offered 30 changes of garments for solving a riddle? *Moses, Samson, Peter, Solomon*

5. To what city was Saul traveling near when he heard the voice of Jesus? *Antioch, Damascus, Paphos, Rome*

6. From 1 Kings 4, how many governors did King Solomon have? *12, 61, 100, 192*

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) 70 times seven; 3) Esther; 4) Samson; 5) Damascus; 6) 12

*Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit [www.TriviaGuy.com](http://www.TriviaGuy.com)*

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## Tomato and Basil Onion Soup

Homegrown tomatoes soon will be nothing but a pleasant memory. But before they are, why not stir up a pot of this wonderful soup? It's perfect for all of us tomato and basil fans!

- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can reduced-fat tomato soup
- 1 cup water
- 3 cups peeled and chopped fresh tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil or 2 teaspoons dried basil

In a large saucepan sprayed with butter-flavored cooking spray, saute onion for 6-8 minutes. Stir in tomato soup and water. Bring mixture to a boil. Stir in tomatoes and basil. Lower heat and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 4 (1 1/4 cup) servings.

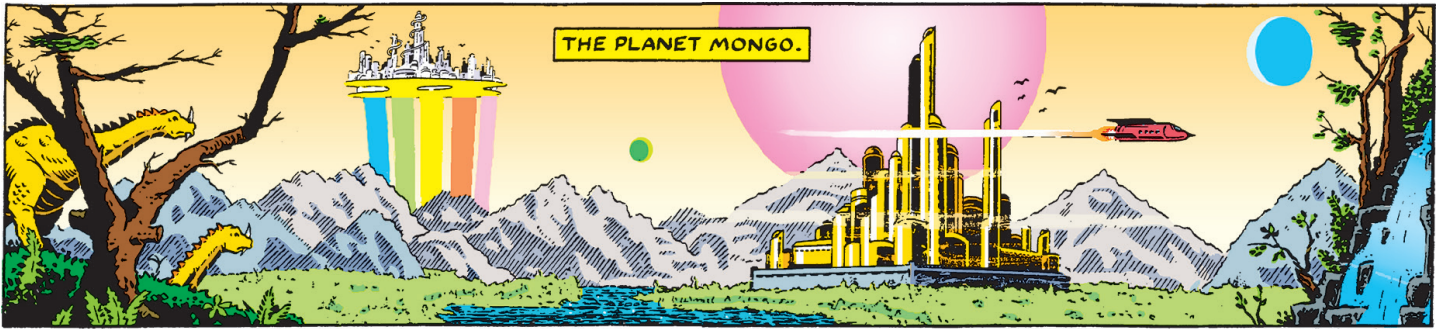
TIP: 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes can be used in place of fresh tomatoes.

\* Each serving equals: 109 calories, 1g fat, 2g protein, 23g carb., 300mg sodium, 3g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Vegetable, 1/2 Starch.

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**FLASH GORDON**  
By JIM KEEFE  
8-29  
Pencils: MARK McMURRAY

AS TENGSI DESCENDS INTO THE LAIR OF THE LIZARD-MEN, THE SCENT OF DECAY GROWS EVER STRONGER.

www.flashgordon.com

SCREAMING!! SCREAMING! AHHHHK

SCREAMING AS SHE WAS TAKEN AWAY, NEVER TO RETURN...

HER SISTER SCREAMING...

AT THE STENCH, MEMORIES SWIRL IN HORRIFYING CLARITY.

JUST A GRAKKEL... LOST MY NERVE ON ACCOUNT OF A STUPID CAVE BIRD.

SUDDENLY, TENGSI REALIZES SHE IS NOT ALONE.

IN THE DARKNESS SHE HEARS THEM SLITHER EVER CLOSER... SURROUNDING HER.

THERE IS TIME FOR A STIFLED SCREAM...

AAAAAAMFFF... THEN ALL IS SILENT.

CONT'D

## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

THE OPTIONS IN BAD WEATHER ARE TO STAY HOME, COMPLAIN AND SCORE BADLY, OR ACCEPT AND RESPOND TO THE CONDITIONS AS AN EXTRA CHALLENGE. I'VE ALWAYS LIKED THE THIRD OPTION THE BEST.

JM

THE MORE SEVERE THE CONDITIONS, THE MORE CONSERVATIVELY YOU SHOULD PLAN AND PLAY YOUR SHOTS.

BY RESISTING THE TEMPTATION TO ATTACK THE COURSE, YOU'LL FIND YOU RETAIN MORE ENERGY FOR THE LATTER STAGES OF THE ROUND, WHICH IS IMPORTANT IN WILD WEATHER.



## Surgery Is Valid Option for Severe Sleep Apnea

---  
DEAR DR. ROACH: My son, who is 30 years old, was recently diagnosed with severe obstructive sleep apnea and currently uses a CPAP machine. He says does not want to use this for the rest of his life, therefore, he has researched surgery to correct his OSA. Recently he consulted with a sleep expert, and now has surgery scheduled with that doctor.

My son will have a septoplasty and a palate expansion before a more radical surgery in a year called MMA. My son feels that these surgeries will give him the longest lasting cure for his OSA. I am very concerned about all of these surgeries. I value your objective opinion and hope you can give me some reassurance that these surgeries are worth the pain. -- G.M.

ANSWER: Although CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure, which works by using air to keep the airway open) is the usual treatment for obstructive sleep apnea, surgery is another effective way to treat OSA. Surgery is most appropriate for those who wish a surgical solution (some people can't stand the CPAP machine), those who have a surgically correctable problem (see below), and those who are good candidates for surgery; younger age makes surgery seem more reasonable to me.

The specific surgery chosen depends on an individual's unique anatomy. Surgery on the uvula (yes, the dangling thing at the back of the throat), soft palate and pharynx is the most common surgery, but maxillomandibular advancement surgery (MMA) has been shown to be successful in several well-known medical centers in the U.S., such as Mayo Clinic and Stanford. Success rates are high, and some studies have shown surgical cure of obstructive sleep apnea in over half of those who undergo the procedure.

Not knowing your son and not being a surgeon, I can't give an objective opinion for him in particular, but I can say that in appropriate patients, surgical treatment of OSA is reasonable.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: Is there any good way to find the correct blood pressure medicine that doesn't suck the life pep out of you, give you a headache, make you short of breath when walking or grapple with all of those side effects at once? Who should manage that program, your regular doctor or your cardiologist? Is there another specialist with the right insight and expertise? -- E.M.

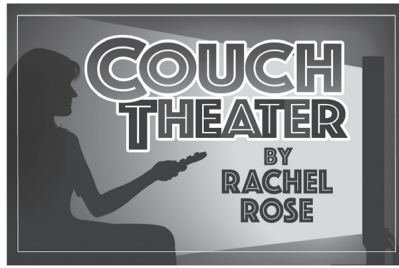
ANSWER: Choosing the best blood pressure medicine for a person with high blood pressure starts with knowing as much as possible about the person's heart and blood vessels, and their other medical conditions. A person with blockages in the arteries should be on a beta blocker and ACE inhibitor most of the time. A person with diabetes should be on an ACE inhibitor or angiotensin receptor blocker. An older person with isolated high systolic pressure may get most benefit from a diuretic. However, it may still take some trial and error to find the best choice. Most people are able to find a blood pressure regimen that has very few side effects.

Most generalists have expertise in blood-pressure medications, and are likely to know all your conditions. Cardiologists have more expertise in cardiovascular disease, and I refer to high blood pressure experts when I have difficulty getting someone's blood pressure under control.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).

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**Doogie Kamealoha, M.D. (TV-PG)** — As the trend of TV reboots continues, we now have this updated version of the early '90s sitcom "Doogie Howser, M.D." This time around the teenaged physician is a girl who's balancing hospital rounds with time off surfing with friends in her home state of Hawaii. The 10-episode series stars 17-year-old Peyton Elizabeth Lee (who isn't actually Hawaiian, so slight casting fail there). The original theme song now played on ukulele is a nice nostalgic touch. (Disney+)

**Sweet Girl (R)** — In a very timely plot, Jason Momoa plays Ray Cooper, a Pittsburgh blue-collar worker who loses his young wife to cancer. Blaming a pharmaceutical company's CEO for his wife's death after the company pulls a life-saving medication from the market, Ray vows vengeance against him. His teenaged daughter, Rachel, insinuates herself into Ray's violent attacks, and the two soon find themselves fleeing authorities. Fair warning, there are lots of graphic fight scenes that are painful to watch. But a plot twist changes the whole dynamic of the film, so you may end up watching it twice. (Netflix)

**9/11: Inside the President's War Room (NR)** — With all the previous documentaries that have come out over nearly 20 years, it's hard to imagine there is still unseen footage, but such is the claim by the BBC production team bringing this doc just prior to the anniversary of 9/11. Narrated by Jeff Daniels, the film centers on the vantage points of President George Bush's main advisers in the 12 hours following the Twin Tower strikes, from Vice President Dick Cheney and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, to the president's Secret Service detail, his press secretary and the pilot of Air Force One. Hundreds of never-before-seen photographs and archived film give a new insight into the decision-makers on that horrific

day. (Apple TV+)

**First Wives Club (TV-14)** — This BET original series isn't really a reboot of the hugely successful 1996 movie, it's more like a reinterpretation of it in episodic form. It still focuses on three long-time friends who all find themselves divorcing their cheating or otherwise dubious husbands at the same time, but that's where the similarities end. The jokes fall flat and the writing is uninspiring. Singer Jill Scott is dynamic, but her talents are underutilized here. (BET+)



Disney+

**Peyton Elizabeth Lee in "Doogie Kamealoha, M.D."**

## In Case You Missed It

**I Don't Like Mondays (NR)** — This 2006 documentary tells the story of 16-year-old Brenda Spencer, who perpetrated America's first mass school shooting. The 1979 tragedy inspired the pop song "I Don't Like Mondays" by the Boomtown Rats, written for Spencer's stated reason for why she began shooting that morning in San Diego. The film covers events up to and including her 2005 parole hearing, mostly through interviews with childhood survivors of the event, family members of those killed, police on scene and her own parents. What is unexpected is the shocking number of times that Spencer was repeatedly failed by adults who could have changed the course of her life, and how the public's focus on her statement overshadowed the full story. (Prime Video)

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1. What group released "Love Can Make You Happy"?

2. Which Spiral Starecase song was taken from an 1889 poem, originally written in French, by Rosemonde Gerard?

3. Name the solo artist who released "Mama Can't Buy You Love."

4. How many times did Michael Jackson win a Grammy for Album of the Year?

5. Name the song that contains the lyrics: "I only meant to love you, Didn't you know it, babe, didn't you know it? Why couldn't you be content with the love I gave?"

## Answers

1. Mercy, in 1969. The song was kept from the No.

1 spot on the charts by the Beatles' "Get Back." It can be heard in the film "Fireball Jungle."

2. "More Today Than Yesterday," in 1969.

3. Elton John, in 1979. It was John's first top 10 song in the U.S. in three years, reaching No. 9 on the Billboard chart. It then spent a week at the top of the Adult Contemporary chart and was certified gold.

4. Once, for "Thriller," in 1984.

5. "The Chokin' Kind," by Waylon Jennings, in 1967. Joe Simon followed with a cover in 1969, topping the charts. He nabbed the Grammy for Best R&B Vocal Performance for the song.

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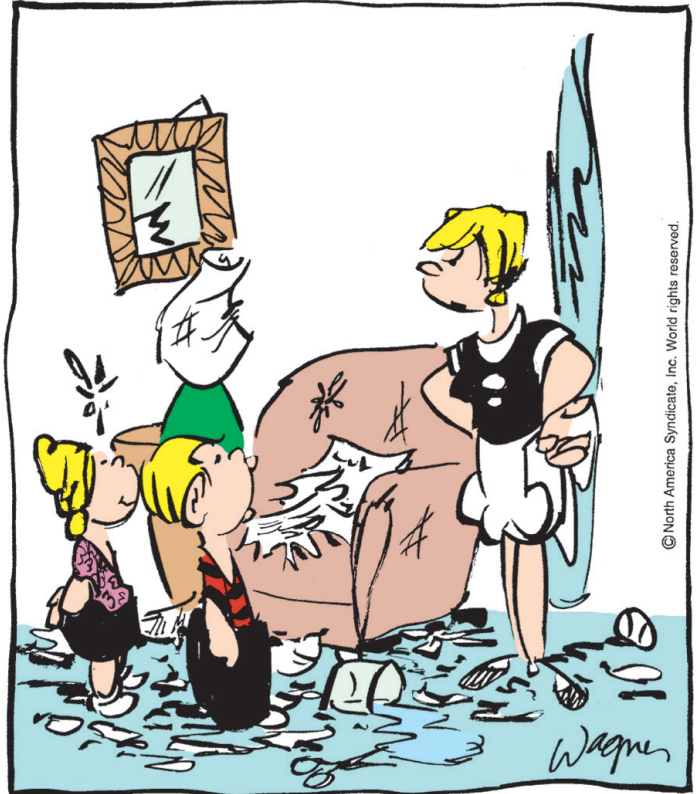
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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## GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>by Wagner</sup>

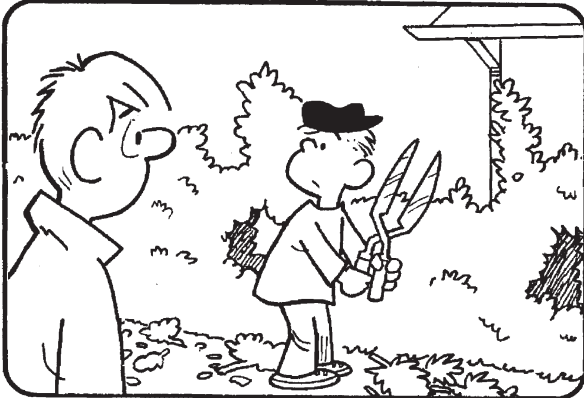


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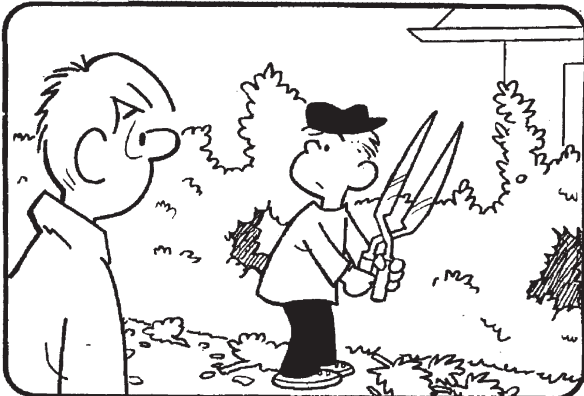
"My imaginary friend was out of control, Mom!"

## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Blades are longer. 2. Drainpipe is missing. 3. Pants are different. 4. Leaf is removed. 5. Window is added. 6. Collar is different.



- For a little extra visibility in the basement, try applying glow-in-the-dark or reflective tape on the edges of the stairs.

- This tip will change your life when peeling eggs: After you have hard-boiled your eggs, drain and submerge in ice water. Put them back in the pot, put the lid on and shake. Shake in all directions for up to a minute. The eggs practically slip right out of their shells. Just rinse and prep. — *JoAnn*

- “To distinguish your keys, especially house keys that have similar stamps, simply paint the key head with different colors of nail polish. You could even add a very subtle dot of the matching polish on the key lock. Reapply as needed.” — *S.L. in Oregon*

- If you keep birds, here’s a reminder: Never preheat pans on high heat — especially nonstick pans. They can let off a chemical that you or I cannot detect but can be a health hazard if your bird friend is in the kitchen area. Don’t keep birds in the kitchen when cooking.

- “To mark the end on a roll of tape, save your bread tabs. Stick one on the tape end and it will be ready and easy to start the next time. If it’s a thick tape, you can use two clips — one at either side of the tape. This way, it won’t split on you.” — *M.E. in Maryland*

- Use a flat iron to iron your collar if it’s rumped. This also works to straighten out buttonholes that have crimped.

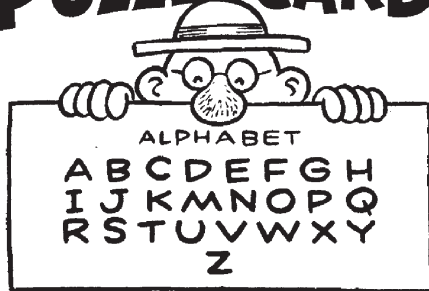
*Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.*

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## PUZZLE CARD

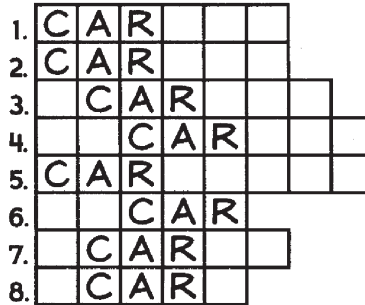


WHAT HOLIDAY is shown above?

Christmas, since there is no "L" (Noel) in this alphabet.

## Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



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### "CAR" FARE!

THE following puzzle is a perfect way to pass the time if you get caught in a traffic jam this weekend. To the left is a list of eight words, each of which contains a "car." The following hints will help:

1. It holds water or wine.
2. Type of waiter.
3. A wind instrument.
4. Pasta.
5. A traveling show.
6. Type of priest.
7. An Egyptian beetle.
8. Neckerchief.



**SMART DARTS!** Using the target at right, how would you score exactly 100 points using just six darts?

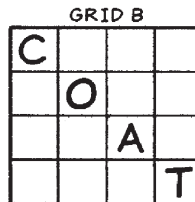


You must throw four darts into the "17" circle and two darts into the "16" circle.

**RAIN GAME!** Pictured below are two puzzle grids. Each grid contains four words, which you must discern. Hints are given for each word. The words in Grid B contain the same letters as the corresponding words in Grid A.



- |                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Hard stone.   | 1. Type of bark.         |
| 2. Mexican food. | 2. Winter wear.          |
| 3. Fence part.   | 3. Teller of tall tales. |
| 4. Slender.      | 4. A clue.               |



1. Rock-cork. 2. Taco-coat. 3. Rail-lar. 4. Thin-hint.

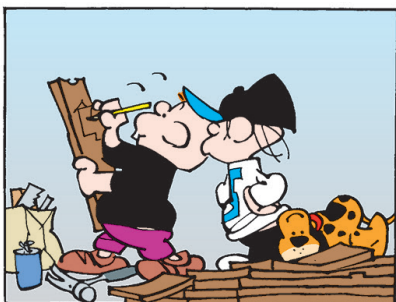
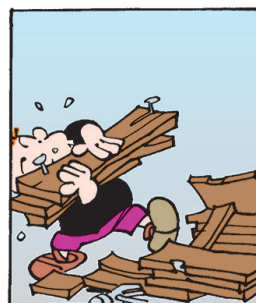
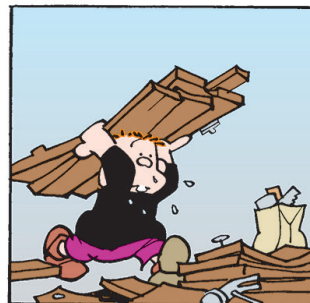
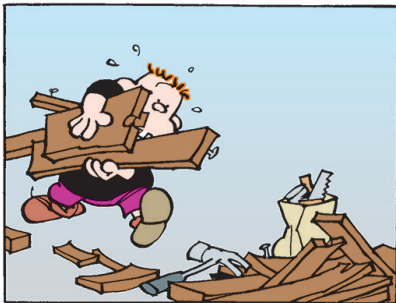
Illustrated by David Coulson



1. Carafe. 2. Carhop. 3. Ocarina. 4. Macaroni. 5. Carnival. 6. Vicar. 7. Scarab. 8. Scarf.

## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Pool stick
- 4 Gasoline dispensers
- 9 Attorney's field
- 12 "Right you —!"
- 13 Not moving
- 14 Blond shade
- 15 Online reference source
- 17 Carefree
- 18 By way of
- 19 Pancake toppers
- 21 Museum tour guide
- 24 — Hari
- 25 Swelled head
- 26 Solidify
- 28 Semesters
- 31 Stately trees
- 33 Homer's neighbor
- 35 Mt. Rushmore's state
- 36 Seized vehicles
- 38 Dict. info
- 40 Sundial numeral
- 41 Hgt.
- 43 Ancient pyramid builders
- 45 Bale
- 47 Mineral suffix
- 48 Days of yore
- 49 Sibelius work or vodka

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12				13						14		
15			16							17		
			18				19		20			
21	22	23					24					
25				26		27		28			29	30
31			32		33		34		35			
36				37		38		39		40		
		41			42		43		44			
45	46						47					
48				49		50				51	52	53
54				55						56		
57				58						59		

- brand
- 54 Blackbird
- 55 Totally
- 56 Inventor Whitney
- 57 Goat's plaint
- 58 Lauder of cosmetics
- 59 Marry
- DOWN**
- 1 Crow's cry
- 2 Mentalist Geller
- 3 "A spider!"
- 4 Slipcover trim
- 5 Like leftovers
- 6 Club —
- 7 Spectrum creator
- 8 Patronize, as a hotel
- 9 New York airport
- 10 Now, in a memo
- 11 Reasons
- 16 "— been had!"
- 20 Numbered rds.
- 21 Woodland grazer
- 22 Leer at
- 23 Summaries
- 27 Went first
- 29 Primary
- 30 Tackles moguls
- 32 Auctioneer's cry
- 34 Cecil B. —
- 37 Arm's-length portrait
- 39 Femme —
- 42 Ore layers
- 44 Longing
- 45 Smile broadly
- 46 Forearm bone
- 50 Rebel Turner
- 51 Morning moisture
- 52 — -de-France
- 53 Succor

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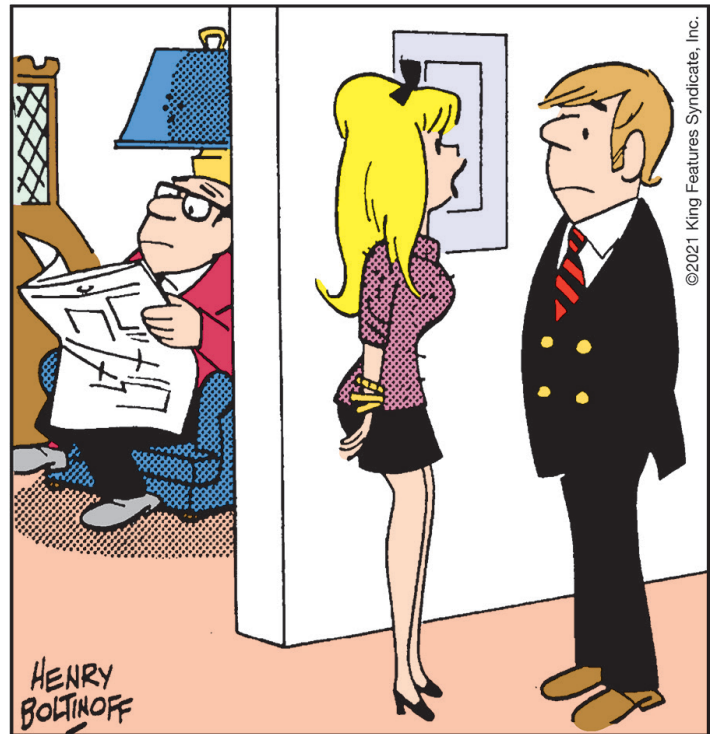
## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

C	U	E		P	U	M	P	S		L	A	W	
A	R	E		I	N	E	R	T		A	S	H	
W	I	K	I	P	E	D	I	A		G	A	Y	
			V	I	A		S	Y	R	U	P	S	
D	O	C	E	N	T		M	A	T	A			
E	G	O		G	E	L		T	E	R	M	S	
E	L	M	S		N	E	D		S	D	A	K	
R	E	P	O	S		D	E	F		I	I	I	
			E	L	E	V		M	A	Y	A	N	S
B	U	N	D	L	E		I	T	E				
E	L	D		F	I	N	L	A	N	D	I	A	
A	N	I		I	N	A	L	L		E	L	I	
M	A	A		E	S	T	E	E		W	E	D	

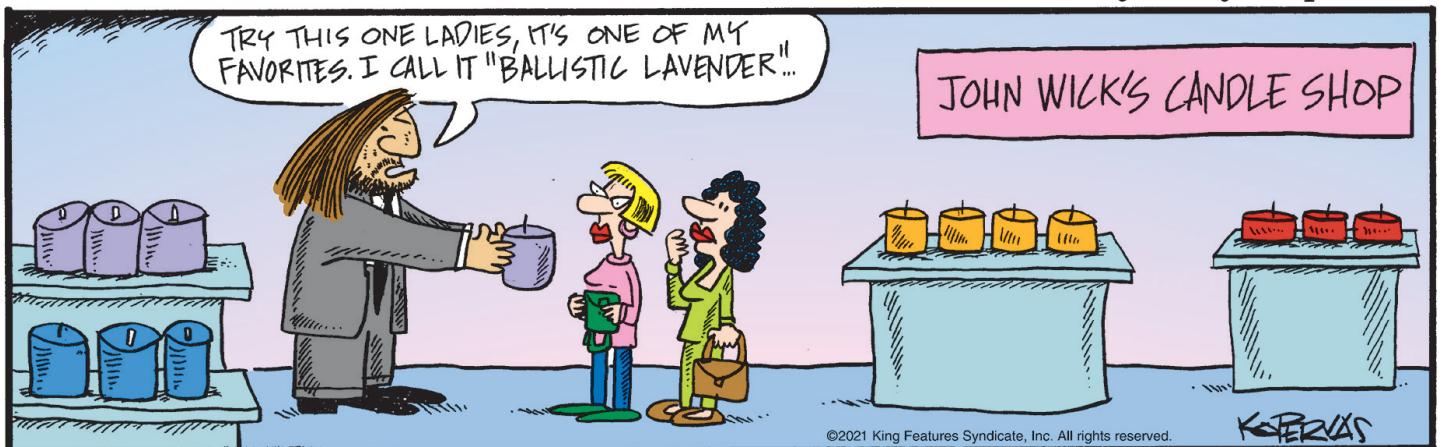
## LAFF - A - DAY



“Here’s your chance to make a good impression on Daddy. He’s looking for somebody who’ll loan him \$100.”

## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

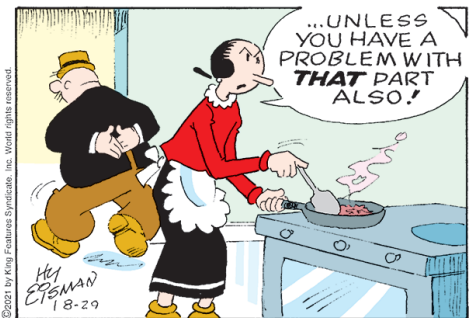
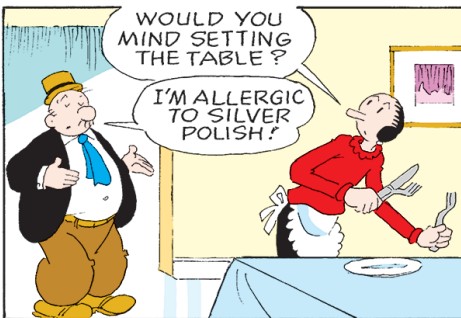
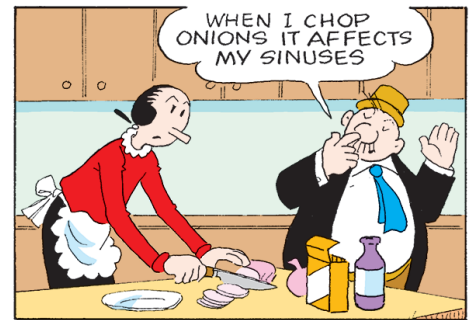
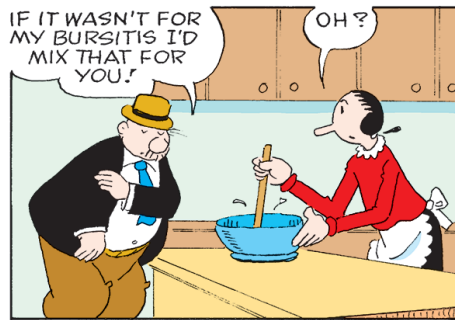
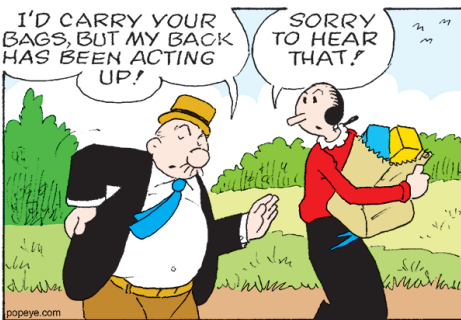
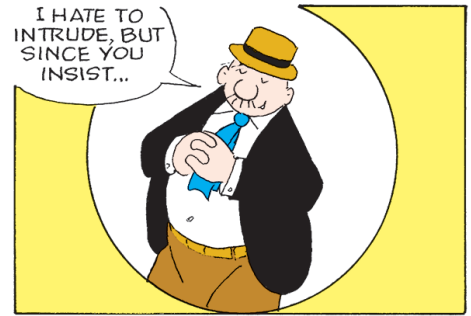
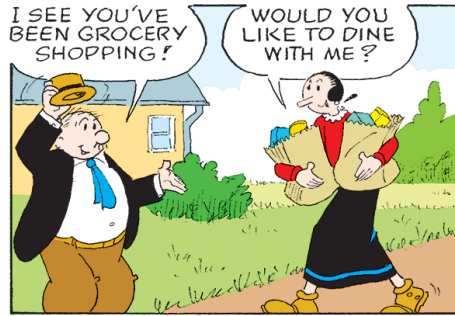
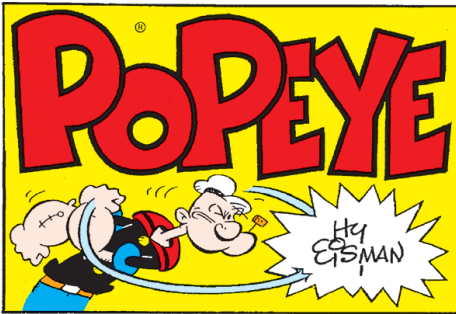


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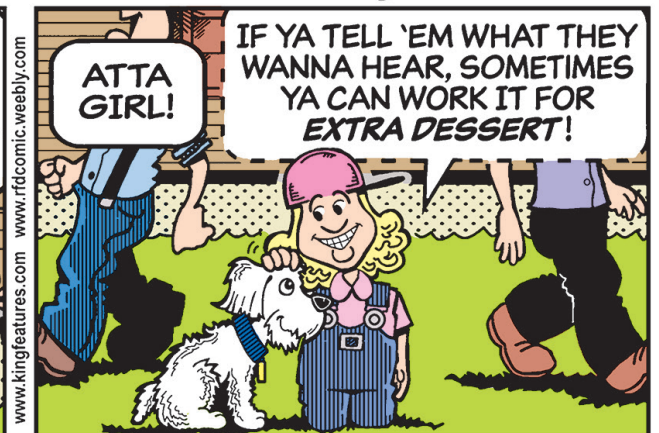
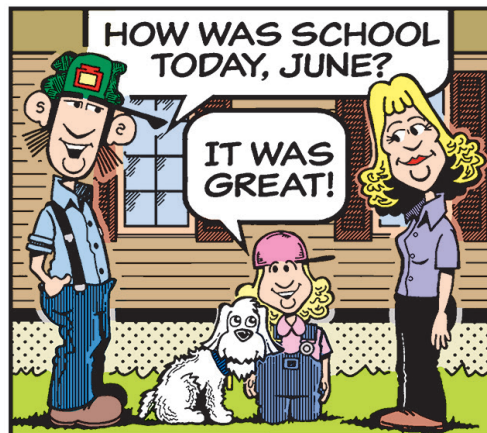
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## R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



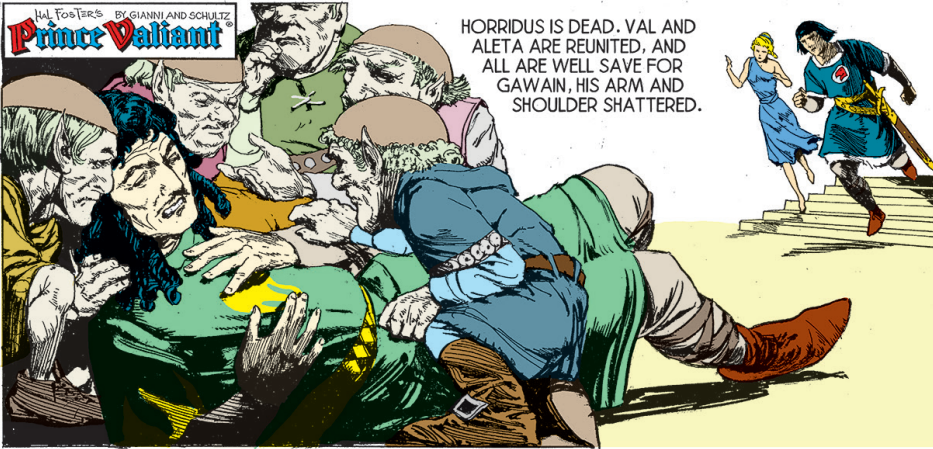
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Hal Foster's  
**Prince Valiant**  
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ



HORRIDUS IS DEAD, VAL AND ALETA ARE REUNITED, AND ALL ARE WELL SAVE FOR GAWAIN, HIS ARM AND SHOULDER SHATTERED.

THE LOYAL ROGUE ATTEMPTS A REASSURING SMILE. "I SEE YOUR CHARMING WIFE IS SAFE-YOU MANAGED WELL WITHOUT ME. GOOD-AS I'M AFRAID I WON'T BE CLIMBING BACK HOME WITH YOU..."



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BUT SILBUG WILL HAVE NONE OF THIS. "NONSENSE! YOU HELPED US CORRECT AN UNFORTUNATE MISTAKE-IT WOULD DO US NO GOOD TO ADD TO THE BLOODY LEGENDS TOLD ABOUT US..."



"BUT TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, WE FIND THE LOT OF YOU TO BE INSUFFERABLE. AH! HERE COMES THE SURGEON-HE WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU DEPART WITH ALL DUE SPEED."



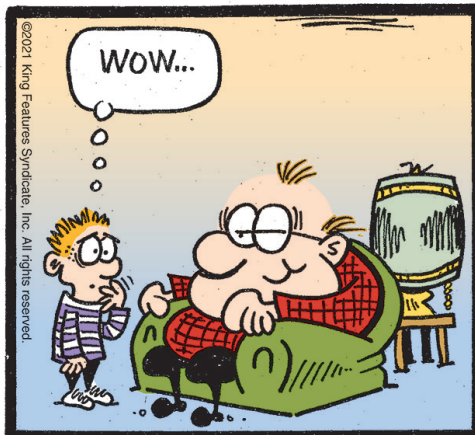
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Temptation

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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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Pickering

## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Listen Up: Engage Your Brain With Podcasts

Have you ever listened to a podcast? A podcast is a digital audio or video file that you can access from the internet. They're often in a series that you can tune into one at a time, almost like radio on demand. They're usually associated with a website where you can find out what's available and a schedule for new ones. You can listen or watch on your computer, phone or tablet, but you'll need an app (application) if you want to download and take it with you, unless your phone has one pre-installed.

One way to find entertaining podcasts is to plug one of your areas of interest into a web browser and add "podcast" to see what comes up. Or as a place to start, look at AARP's website ([www.aarp.org/podcasts](http://www.aarp.org/podcasts)) and see what it offers. Right now, there are podcasts about various scams, protecting your finances and high prescription-drug prices, all worth a listen. Scroll to the

bottom of the page for instructions.

If you search the internet for podcasts, you'll find vintage radio programs, celebrities, financial information, stories from history, news, brain stretchers, sports themes, stress reduction and so much more. There must be hundreds of thousands of podcasts out there to choose from. Try a search for "podcasts for seniors" to see what surprises pop up.

Another way to keep your brain stretched is with online classes, called MOOCs, which stands for massive open online courses. There are thousands you can audit for free, attending remotely without ever leaving home. You don't receive credit for audited classes. Coursera ([www.coursera.org](http://www.coursera.org)) is your go-to source for online learning. (At this writing, it lists 1,782 free courses from 200 universities.) Or see Edx ([www.edx](http://www.edx)).



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1. What Philadelphia Flyers goaltender was killed in a car accident in 1985 and posthumously selected to the NHL All-Star Game the following year?

2. Name "The Fight Doctor" who served as Muhammad Ali's physician and cornerman from 1962-77.

3. The Carolina Courage, Philadelphia Charge and San Diego Cyber-Rays were teams in what women's soccer league that played three seasons from 2001-03?

4. What is the bowling term for a ball that crosses over to the other side of the head pin opposite the side it was thrown?

5. Name the journalist/sportswriter whose column "Hey, Rube" appeared on ESPN.com from 2000-05?

6. What sanctioning body for the motorsport of drag racing was found-



ed by Wally Parks in 1951?

7. Remington Products CEO and spokesman Victor Kiam was principal owner of what NFL team from 1988-91?

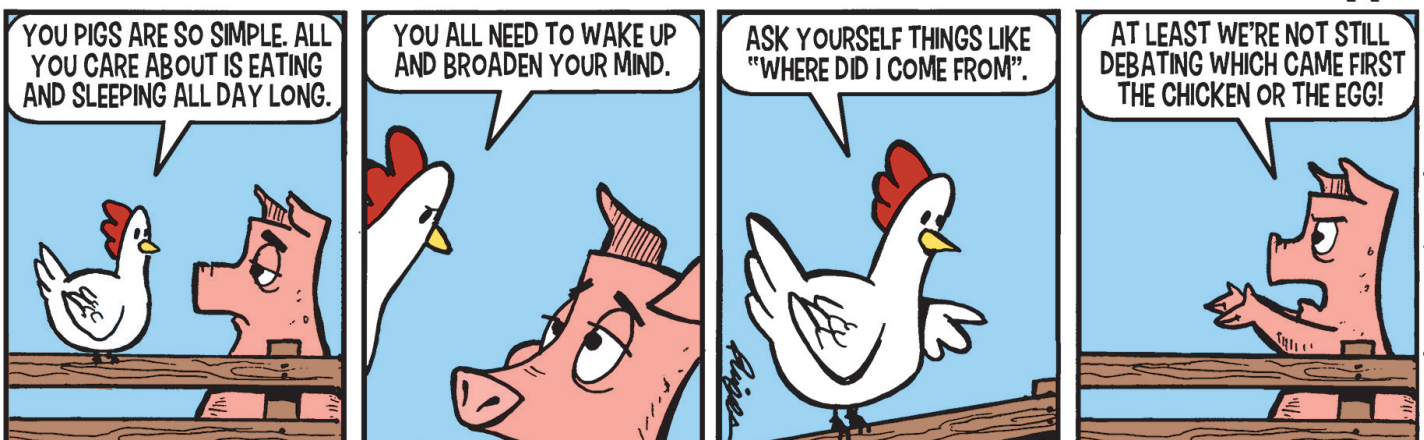
## Answers

1. Pelle Lindbergh.
2. Ferdie Pacheco.
3. Women's United Soccer Association (WUSA).
4. Brooklyn.
5. Hunter S. Thompson.
6. National Hot Rod Association (NHRA).
7. The New England Patriots.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## Help! My Cats Have Started Fighting

**DEAR PAW'S CORNER:** My two cats, Mitsy and Bitsy, got along well for nearly five years. Bitsy is 11 years old, about six years older than Mitsy. In the past couple of months, they squall and squabble with each other every time they're in the same room. What is going on, and how do I stop it? — *Cara C., Albuquerque, New Mexico*

**DEAR CARA:** Take both of your cats to the veterinarian as soon as an appointment is available. Because the behavior just recently started after years of tranquility, a health issue could be at the root of their fighting.

Senior cats are especially likely to develop conditions that cause them to be cranky or more territorial than usual. Pain from arthritis or other conditions can be a big factor in making Bitsy irritable, tired and just not in the

mood to hang out with Mitsy. Likewise, Mitsy could be developing a medical condition; it's best to rule out physical problems in both cats.

Once their health has been assessed and treatment, if necessary, started, then the hard work of reconciling the two can begin. Keep the cats separated at first — on opposite sides of the house, if possible, in closed rooms. Each day, reintroduce them by placing a small plate of food in front of each door and letting them out. If they calmly eat, then the next day, move both plates closer. Observe the cats as they eat; if they begin to growl or tense up, put both back into their rooms before they escalate — fighting is very traumatic for them. Shift the bowls back a bit and try again.

*Send your questions, comments or tips to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).*

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

\* Christopher Havens, a high school dropout and convicted murderer, taught himself advanced mathematics and solved a decades-old math puzzle involving "continued fractions" while in prison. He then published his findings in an international advanced math journal in January 2020.

\* The Grand Canyon is so big that it creates its own weather.

\* In August 1971, the Pittsburgh Pirates became the first professional team to have all nine players in the lineup be of Black or Latino descent.

\* World War II German interrogator Hanns Scharff's unusual techniques for extracting information -- which included sharing his wife's homemade baked goods, cracking jokes, unsupervised nature walks and afternoon tea -- were so successful that the U.S. military later incorporated them into their own interrogation schools.

\* The blood in that infamous "Psycho" shower scene was actually chocolate syrup.

\* Because it turns yellow when fully ripe, the Persian lime is not commonly found in markets, as it gets confused for lemons, but is used for most commercial purposes.

\* Hungarian composer Franz Liszt received so many requests for locks of his hair that he bought a dog and sent fur clippings instead.

\* The Bible is the most commonly stolen book in the world.

\* Pill bugs, also known as roly-polys, are not insects but rather crustaceans. They breathe through gills and are more closely related to shrimp and lobsters than other bugs.

\* The moon is not round, but shaped like an egg.

\* Brunettes are more likely than anyone else to become hooked on nicotine. The high levels of the pigment melanin in their hair also make it difficult for the liver to metabolize the nicotine, keeping it in the system longer and making it easier to become addicted.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "The vacation we often need is freedom from our own mind." -- Jack Adam Weber

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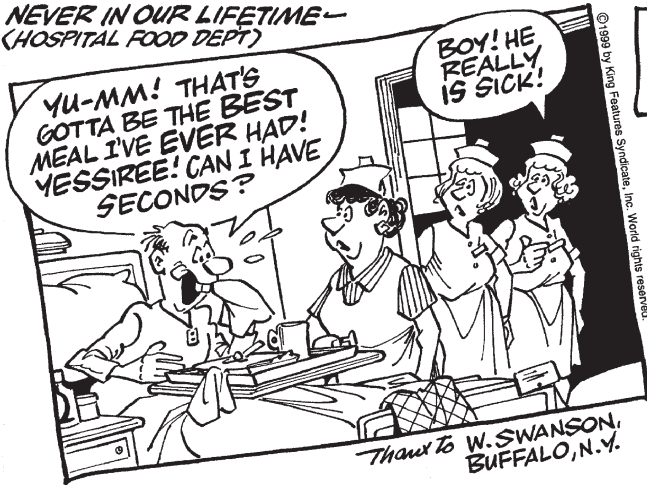
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## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO

NEVER IN OUR LIFETIME--  
(HOSPITAL FOOD DEPT)



Thank to W. SWANSON,  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

J'EVER NOTICE? THE COLDEST DAY OF THE YEAR.. THE BUS DRIVER HAS THE HEATER ON FULL BLAST.. HE'S COMEY IN SHIRT SLEEVES... BUT HIS PASSENGERS..HOW COMEY ARE THEY? DON'T ASK!



Thank to V. CAGGIANO,  
SANTA MONICA, CA.

10-17

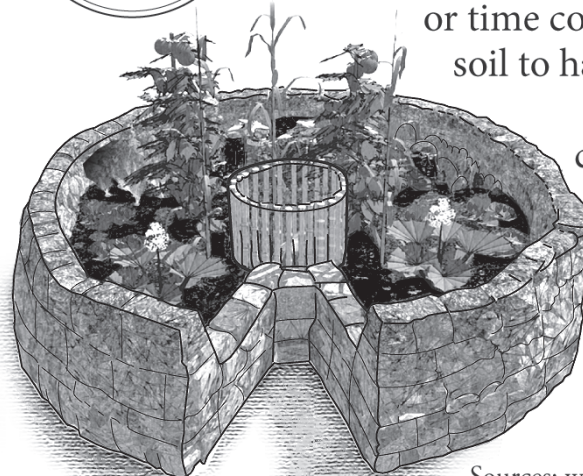
THAT WANNA CRAWL-INTO-A-  
HOLE-AND-DIE FEELING ...



Thank to S. WEINTRAUB,  
SO. PLAINFIELD, N.J.



### Keyhole garden



This raised-bed garden design is an option for those who are unable to manage a larger, in-ground space due to physical limitations or time constraints. Its design allows the soil to have direct access at all times to the nutrients in the built-in composting bin. The "keyhole" is a wedge-shaped opening where the gardener can walk easily to the composting bin and refill it.

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: [www.bigblogofgardening.com](http://www.bigblogofgardening.com), [concernusa.org](http://concernusa.org)

## VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

### Veterans Village Making Progress

The first customer to purchase one of the tiny homes was a town police officer who'd been sent to investigate a complaint about the parking lot being full of construction materials.

"I own the lot," said Sarge.

The officer nodded. "Then do what you want."

He stepped over to the first tiny home and peeked in. Within a half hour, the officer had chosen his flooring and exterior cladding, signed a purchase agreement and put down a cash deposit, the \$17 he had in his pocket.

David, the homeless veteran foreman of the Veterans Village project, stood gripping the \$17 after the officer left.

"I've just sold my first tiny home," he said to Sarge, amazed and stunned. "He'll be back tomorrow with a cashier's check for the whole thing."

Sarge patted him on the shoulder and headed into the coffee shop, where he

pulled out his phone and punched in some numbers.

By 10 o'clock the next morning, the second tiny home was also sold, full of custom extras.

By noon, David was at the counter in the coffee shop, Sarge at his elbow, while he tapped frantically at a calculator and consulted a notebook of costs.

"Can this be right? Is this possibly be right?"

Sarge checked the math, tapping the calculator: sales prices minus cost of materials, minus carpenter wages, minus, minus, minus, until he hit grand total.

"That's right."

David slumped onto a stool. "Sell two more tiny homes and I'll be able to put something down on that land," he said, "before it's gone."

Sarge ran a hand down his jaw, considering the secret he'd been keeping. Then he pulled a much-folded savings bank statement from his back pocket and handed it to David.

"This is from the old vets here," Sarge said, "plus their families, plus many others, plus a state grant, to help you get Veterans Village started. For you to buy the land and pay cash. You'll own it outright."

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CONGRESSMAN  
**DUSTY JOHNSON**  
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



## Tragedy in Afghanistan

The events that unfolded in Afghanistan over the last few weeks have been a tragedy.

It was devastating to hear the news that thirteen servicemembers were killed – the deadliest day in Afghanistan in over a decade – outside the airport gates in Kabul while assisting Americans and Afghan allies urgently trying to flee the country.

It was heartbreaking to watch desperate Afghans clinging to C-17s and fearful mothers passing their infants off to our servicemembers in a last-ditch effort to save them from a life under the Taliban.

It was disappointing to witness the United States' decades-long counterterrorism and nation-building efforts in Afghanistan fall to the Taliban in mere days.

Most Americans agree that we could not stay in Afghanistan forever – a military withdrawal from Afghanistan was inevitable.

But how we left was disastrous.

The Biden Administration engaged in a lack of planning and series of poor decisions. Every official responsible for this failure must be held accountable.

Last week, I sent a letter to President Biden pressing him on his plans to evacuate Americans out of Afghanistan following the arbitrary August 31st deadline, to ensure remaining U.S. military equipment is reclaimed from the Taliban, and to assist Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders and other at-risk Afghans left behind.

As this catastrophe unfolded, there were however a few glimmers of hope in humanity. Our troops stepped up. In Afghanistan, U.S. special operations veterans carried out daring missions to save Afghan allies. Back home, my office worked around the clock to help South Dakotans who knew Americans and allies on the ground urgently request to evacuate with the State Department and Defense Department. We are actively assisting over 100 individuals and were successful in evacuating 20 individuals who were either lawful permanent residents, SIV applicants, or at-risk Afghan allies.

Despite the failure of our withdrawal from Afghanistan, U.S. involvement in the region led to the death of Osama Bin Laden, greatly diminished Al-Qaeda and prevented additional terrorist attacks on home soil, paved way for the advancement of rights for Afghan women and girls, and saved countless Afghan lives from the terror of the Taliban regime.

To our U.S. servicemembers who answered the call of duty in Afghanistan over the last twenty years, your service was not in vain and our country will never forget your service to our nation. My prayers are with our Afghanistan veterans and Gold Star families.

South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## Hunting Season is Serious Business in South Dakota

I love the fall. Cooler days. County fairs with youth livestock shows going on almost every weekend. And, of course, heading out to the fields to shoot the state bird.

As tourism season draws to a close, hunting seasons are beginning to open around the state. Dove, Antelope, Deer and Canada Geese seasons recently opened, kicking off the fall 2021 hunting calendar.

Over the next four months, South Dakotans and non-resident hunters will flock to the fields and forests in search of fertile grounds. Thanks to the enthusiasm brought by our hunter-friendly policies, both hunters and the state are reaping benefits from seasonal outings.

It's estimated the annual hunting season brings in about \$500 million to the state economy, benefiting businesses of all sizes. When combined with fishing and other outdoor activities, the total economic footprint of our Game, Fish, and Parks Department is about \$1.33 billion. A new study going on now is looking at this season's figures and will give us a better post-pandemic picture of how hunting is benefiting local economies.

The fees collected from licensing alone bring in nearly \$28 million each year to support our Game, Fish, and Parks Department. Those funds go to our conservation officers, habitat improvements, grassland restorations, and much more. Our Hunt for Habitat raffle raised \$329,000 this year — the raffle has raised more than \$1 million total over its first three years — to support more than 6,500 acres of habitat restoration and improvement across 18 counties. Since 2013, the Bighorn Sheep auction has raised nearly \$1 million for bighorn sheep reintroduction projects, wildlife disease testing labs and research, and water development projects.

All but one of the winning tags from this year's Hunt for Habitat raffle went to South Dakota hunters. That's because hunting is serious business in our state.

Last year, South Dakota was No. 1 in the nation for the percentage of residents obtaining a hunting license (nearly 25%) — we were No. 11 overall based on total non-resident hunting licenses issued. And while we are known for our premier pheasant hunting, we also are favorites among archers coming in at No. 4 on BowHunting.com's most hunter-friendly states.

We're not taking these accolades for granted, either. Since 2019, the Second Century Initiative has fought

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to maintain family hunting traditions by introducing kids to the adventure of the outdoors, while conserving our outdoor culture for the next generation.

Thanks to the Second Century Initiative, we are seeing remarkable pheasant numbers, which increases interest in South Dakota as a hunting destination. Our Nest Predator Bounty program is getting more youth involved in trapping while also helping to boost our pheasant numbers through increased nest success.

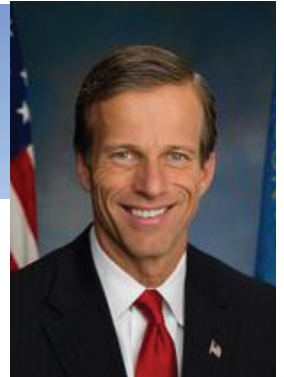
All of these actions are meant to protect and sustain our rich outdoor legacy in South Dakota. Hunting, trapping, and living off the land are all valuable skills that should be handed down to the next generation. Hunting also provides a great outlet for exercise, positive mental health benefits, and the value of knowing exactly where your food is coming from.

To learn about hunting in South Dakota, or how to obtain a license, go to [gfp.sd.gov/hunt/](http://gfp.sd.gov/hunt/) and click the "Purchase License" banner. While at the website, you can also learn about our youth mentor program, which was recently expanded by the legislature. There's also information about accessing hunting areas.

Good luck to all the hunters gearing up for another fun season! Thank you for what you do to keep our state's traditions alive and thriving for the next generation of hunters.



**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## Help Wanted

This summer, as I've visited small and big towns across South Dakota, there have been a lot of issues on the top of people's minds – from Afghanistan to border security to keeping our communities safe. As I visited local businesses, though, one issue stood out above all else: worker shortages. No one can seem to find enough workers to meet the growing demand as our economy continues to get stronger. In some cases, unfortunately, the inability to find workers has led to reduced capacity or hours of operation. Fewer employees means fewer people to serve customers.

These worker shortages are not just an illusion. At the end of June, job openings in the United States had reached 10.1 million – a record high. The national employment rate currently stands at 5.2 percent. In South Dakota, our unemployment rate is even lower. This low rate, which means the available workforce is small, paired with our booming economy in South Dakota, which means consumer demand is high, has created the workforce shortages that South Dakotans are seeing and feeling.

To be clear, an expanding economy and near record-low unemployment are good things. They are positive signs of a strong economy. That said, they are not without their challenges, which is why it is so important to keep our eye on the ball and implement positive solutions so these resulting workforce shortages don't stunt economic growth. I support allowing free market forces to adapt and address these shortages over heavy-handed government intervention, but we can implement common-sense changes to help specific areas that have been hit particularly hard. That's why I've made expanding the H-2B visa program a priority. Many South Dakota businesses rely on workers who temporarily come to the United States through this program. South Dakota businesses in industries from tourism and hospitality to construction and forestry have benefitted tremendously from it.

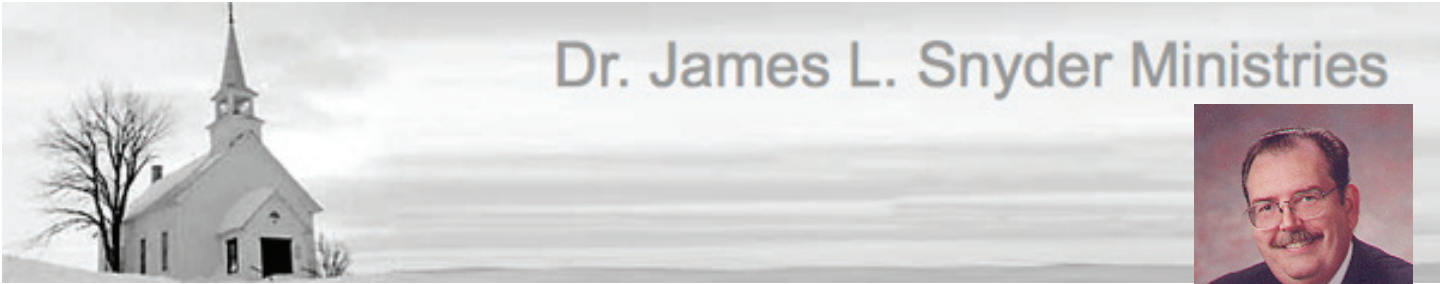
A low unemployment rate like we have now means a high number of South Dakotans who want to work have jobs, but it can present challenges for states like ours that rely on a seasonal, supplemental workforce. The H-2B visa program gives our businesses an additional employment pool to pull from when there is a high seasonal demand. I've introduced multiple bills that would help raise the cap on this program. My Prioritizing Help to Businesses Act would set aside up to 2,500 H-2B visas for states like South Dakota that are at or below 3.5 percent unemployment with a capped increase of 25 percent over the previous year's H-2B total. It's a new approach that I hope will be considered as we evaluate ways to improve the worker shortage in South Dakota's seasonal industries.

Another industry that has struggled to find workers, even before the current shortage, is telecommunications. South Dakota is helping to lead the way in these technological advancements. As we work to deploy 5G technology and provide more of rural South Dakota with a reliable internet connection, we cannot afford a lack of qualified workers to hold us back. My Telecommunications Skilled Workforce Act, which recently passed the Senate, would help address the shortage of trained workers who will be necessary to fill next-generation jobs in the telecommunications industry.

These bills are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to addressing the workforce shortages in our state. There is certainly more work to be done, and I will continue to look for light-touch ways to help South Dakota businesses find workers. All things considered, I would rather see "help wanted" signs posted in shop windows than long lines at the unemployment office. A low unemployment rate means that more South Dakotans have a steady paycheck to support themselves and their families. But we cannot ignore these workforce shortages. I am focused on continuing to develop solutions in Washington to address the side effects of low unemployment so our economy can continue to grow and create more opportunities for South Dakotans.

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## Hallelujah... She's Baaaaack

I have learned that you don't miss something until it is gone. Unfortunately, sometimes, it's too late.

Over six weeks ago, or was it nine months, I took my truck in for a regular checkup. I was going away for the week, so I thought I would drop the truck off and let them work on it when they had time, and then when I come back, it would be ready.

I love it when a plan comes together?

My family went up to Georgia for a family reunion. It was also a time to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. Time goes by when we're not really focused on what's happening. That's me to a T.

I took it in on Monday, then we left for our family reunion, and on Tuesday, the machine shop called me with some rather sad news. The engine in my truck was just about finished. So I had a choice of getting a new engine or buying another truck.

The last idea wasn't a good one for me.

After some serious thought, I agreed to have a new engine put in the truck. After all, the cost would be a fraction of what getting another truck would be.

I didn't know how much I liked my truck until it was gone for six weeks.

During those six weeks, my wife and I shared her little van for our travels. We had to coordinate our schedule so we could be united.

The scheduling was something like this.

She would drive her van, and I would go along when we would go to church or some other function that we had to be together. So that wasn't too bad.

Then, when she had to go somewhere, she would use her van. Sometimes she would drop me off at the church office and then go on her schedule and then come back and pick me up. That wasn't too bad.

When she had nowhere to go, and I had somewhere to go, I would then be driving her little van. I did not know how little this van was until I started driving it.

When I'm on the passenger side it is not too bad. I can squeeze in and survive. But when I'm on the driver's side, that was a completely different story.

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Everything about her van was completely different from the things in my truck.

Driving that little van was a very challenging job. I did not know how hard it was for a real man to drive a sissy van.

I could barely get in on the driver's side, get all buckled up and ready to go. Everything had to be changed, like the mirrors, the seat and the steering wheel.

If I thought getting into that little van was difficult, all I had to do was wait until I had to get out, and that was a completely different story. Several times I actually fell out because there is no real structure for a man my size.

I am surprised I was not involved in some accident for those six weeks of driving that little van. If that would've happened, I probably wouldn't be able to get out of the van.

For the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, that little van is an ideal vehicle, and she drives it like the expert she is.

I was getting a little nervous about my truck. It would only take three weeks to get the engine and have it installed and get everything fixed up to run. But, unfortunately, those three weeks graduated into six weeks. I was afraid I would never see that truck again.

I didn't know how much I really liked that truck until I was driving this little sissy van. In the truck, I could be myself, but in that little van, I could not be myself, that's for sure.

There's a lot of things I miss in life, but I don't realize how much I like something until it's gone. I didn't know I liked my truck as much as I did. Then when it went to the mechanic's garage for six weeks, I realized how important that truck is to me.

Then this past Tuesday, I got that telephone call I was impatiently waiting for. The truck was ready, and all I needed to do was come by and pick it up. But, of course, that meant I needed to pay the bill for the repairs.

When I hung up the phone, I was really excited.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, "Why are you so excited?"

I just looked at her and smiled.

"Oh," she said with a grin, "your truck is ready."

My wife has said many things down the years, but this was the best thing she's ever said in all of our life together.

She drove me to get my truck, and as we were traveling, she looked at me and said, "You really missed your truck, didn't you?"

I thought of a verse of Scripture along this line. "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 John 1:8).

I really don't appreciate what I have until I lose it. This is also true of people. We don't realize how much a person means to us until they are gone.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Is so-called "Off-Earth Manufacturing" really the environmental panacea that Jeff Bezos and other proponents say it is?

M. Traney, Smithfield, RI

In July 2021, Richard Branson rocketed into suborbital space aboard a craft he helped fund, launching a new era of commercial space travel. About a week later, Amazon's Jeff Bezos flew into space on his own Blue Origin rocket. Both rockets emitted plumes of white smoke and tons of kerosene, releasing more greenhouse gases in a few minutes than a typical car would over two centuries. These rockets also emitted black carbon—or soot—into upper layers of the atmosphere, contaminating the air for years to come.

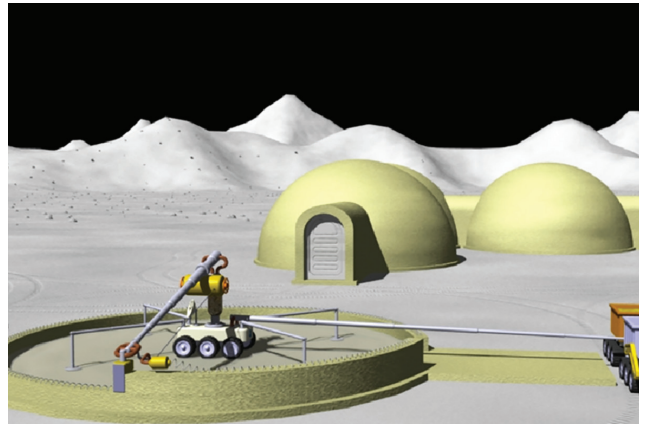
Space companies counter environmental concerns about space flight with promises to construct greener spacecrafts and to transform space into the newest global economic powerhouse. "We need to take all heavy industry, all polluting industry, and move it into space and keep Earth as this beautiful gem of a planet that it is," said Bezos after returning from his trip. Bezos's vision, otherwise known as "Off-Earth manufacturing," centers around the transition of planet-exploitative industries into space.

Many materials extracted on Earth are also available in space. Celestial bodies like asteroids and the Moon contain water and water-derived propellants that can be used for in-space infrastructure. With the global mining industry tumbling from a market value of over \$1.6 trillion in 2010 to \$656 billion in 2020, space resources appear as realistic alternatives for mining. A report by Goldman Sachs, asteroid mining has costs "comparable to traditional mines."

"Off-Earth manufacturing" does drive energy and mining industries away from exploiting the finite resources on Earth, but the construction of such complex systems in space poses many challenges. Apart from the huge expense of launching materials into space, architects familiar with normal conventions of physics will be forced into a foreign field of designing for zero-gravity spaces. Additionally, large amounts of materials need to be produced and transported that are incredibly durable, able to withstand extreme temperatures, and that transmit information without loss.

The road to space commercialization is long and arduous, but the launching of SpaceX and Blue Origin rockets is a key stepping stone. As expenses of space travel continue to decrease, interest and investments in the global space industry will only increase. Bezos has already announced he is spending \$1 billion every year on Blue Origin. Venture capital firms are pouring money into space startups. According to recent data from Space Capital, almost \$38 billion has gone to space infrastructure companies over the past decade. On a wider scale, the global space industry is expected to generate over \$1.1 trillion by 2040 in a report by Morgan Stanley, up from the \$447 billion in a 2020 report by the Space Foundation.

Will time tell if Off-Earth manufacturing can help ease environmental pressures down here on our own planet? One has to wonder why we are so concerned with moving our polluting industries off-planet when we could concentrate instead on cleaning them up down here or eliminating them entirely.



**Artist concept of 3D printing with cementitious materials on the Moon.** Credit:

Greg Trent, Surface Construction.

## Miss South Dakota Joins in Miss America 100th Anniversary Celebration Following a Busy Summer in SD



September 3, 2021, Hot Springs, SD – Miss South Dakota Kaitlin O'Neill will be taking part in the return of the iconic "Show Us Your Shoes" Parade, kicking off a three-day celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of Miss America. The parade will be held on Labor Day, Monday, September 6 at 10 AM ET in Mystic, Connecticut. The "Show Us Your Shoes" Parade will feature all 51 titleholders who are vying to become the next Miss America, and will be streamed live at [watchmissamerica.com](http://watchmissamerica.com).

These accomplished young women will show off their elaborate parade costumes and decorated shoes to showcase their home states and the District of Columbia.

"The Show Us Your Shoes Parade is definitely something I have been looking forward to participating in ever since I started competing! Now, to finally live that dream and be a part of such an iconic event, I can't contain my excitement enough!" O'Neill said. O'Neill's costume and themed shoes, while top-secret, are "inspired by some pretty cool South Dakota history," O'Neill said.

While in Connecticut, O'Neill will also participate in candidate orientation for the upcoming Miss America competition in December, as well as a 100th Anniversary Gala, and experience the official proclamation of September 8th as Miss America Day.

O'Neill has been busy at home in South Dakota since her crowning in early June. "It is crazy how fast three months have flown by! I have had the opportunity to do so many things, meet so many people, and grow in so many ways. For the 4th of July, I was in the Spearfish/Deadwood area where I had the opportunity to be a part of some amazing parades and then got to be a part of the celebrations at Mount Rushmore. That was my first official appearance as Miss South Dakota since being crowned and it felt so surreal! It was so incredible to be a part of the country's birthday celebration in one of the most iconic places in the nation!"

Preparations for the Miss American competition have also been at the forefront for O'Neill.

"One of the main focuses going into Miss America is my mental health. Heading into a mentally challenging environment such as Miss America, I have to be sure to prioritize my mindset. Another priority for me is preparation for the interview competition. Interview and the on-stage question were typically my weakest area of competition. But, after countless hours of practice and preparation, I was honored to receive the On-Stage Question Award as well as the top Private Interview Award at the Miss South Dakota competi-

tion. Going into Miss America, I want to keep that momentum, and I am making sure to put the work in as I did preparing for the Miss South Dakota competition."

O'Neill continues to hone her skills in talent as well. "This has always been my favorite area of competition! I am really excited to be joining Artistry Dance this fall where I will be taking a few different classes to keep in shape and ramp up my talent even further!" O'Neill said.



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**#464 in a series**

## **Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller**

As of midday today, it is clear we're going to hit 40 million cases before the holiday's over. If we didn't have three days of weekend reporting coming up, I would say with some confidence it will happen tonight or tomorrow, but that remains to be seen. We are currently at a total of 39,894,230 with a seven-day new-case average of 163,667. That's huge and still going up, yet it represents a slowing rate of increase. Considering we've come close to 300,000 new cases in a single day this week, I'm going to breathe a big sigh of relief and hope this leveling-off effect continues. It will be difficult to say what we have for over a week as we wait for the holiday weekend effect on case reporting to work its way through the system; but by then, perhaps the trendline will be clearer.

So it appears we may be starting to see better numbers. Rather than a steady drumbeat of worse, worse, worse, eight states had fewer cases in the past week than they did the week before; one—Louisiana—has 51 percent fewer. For a long stretch there, no one was decreasing. Better yet, some of the places where we are seeing sizeable declines in new-case rate are hard-hit places like Missouri, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida. And in even better news, some of what's driving cases down is vaccination; we're administering just under 900,000 doses per day with close to half of those first doses, and the sharpest increases in vaccination rates have occurred in the states with the highest increase in new-case rates. These trends are encouraging, especially in light of the most recent NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll which showed "the share of adults saying 'no' to getting the COVID-19 vaccine dropped 5 percentage points in a month" as the percentage of US adults saying they do not intend to be vaccinated dropped from 24 percent to 19 percent from the end of July to the end of August, welcome news, indeed.

Immunocompromised people have received almost a million doses in the couple of weeks since that was approved. Between that and the ridiculous number of cases we've had, experts like Justin Lessler, epidemiology professor at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, tell us, "We are already getting the benefit of community immunity. . . . we always get there, either the virus or the vaccine gets us there. But that is still what is going to get this under control." Some experts think we've peaked and cases will decline from here, at least until winter sets in; but there are those who see this slowdown as temporary with another sharp increase over the next few weeks likely. We'll have to wait to see how that plays out. Unfortunately, either way, it does appear we're going to have to suffer some more before that happens since so many of us are intent on doing this the hard way. Looks like we have some months of difficulty ahead of us yet—supposing we don't encounter the emergence of another more challenging variant, in which case it could be a whole lot longer.

Hospitalizations are still sky-high at 101,600 and still increasing, but also rising more slowly recently. While they nearly tripled in July and doubled in August, we were looking at just a two percent increase last week, which is a big improvement. Thing is, two percent of a huge number is still a huge number, and so we still have hospitalizations at levels we haven't seen since January when we were in our biggest surge to date, over 100,000 for several days now. We still have nine states with record numbers hospitalized in the last week, mostly in states with below-average vaccination rates. And understand, they're not declining yet; they're just not increasing as fast as they once were. We have a ways to go before we see declines.

Deaths, on the other hand, continue to rise—and fast. A couple of days ago, close to 3000 deaths were reported in a 24-hour period. The seven-day deaths average is currently at 1550; that comes to round 45,000 per month. That's still a whole lot of funerals. And here's a number that's difficult to swallow: Six states have lost more than one in 500 of their residents to Covid-19—not one in 500 of the infected and not one in 500 of people who had symptoms, but one in 500 of everyone in the state. Just living in these states is a pretty fair-sized risk factor for death from Covid-19. These states are North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan, Ohio, New Jersey, and Florida

More than a half-million children were diagnosed with Covid-19 between August 5 and August 26, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. The share of hospitalizations that are children has been rising for some time and continues to rise. The CDC just dropped a paper yesterday that looked at hos-

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pitalization by age group. Findings were that the cumulative hospitalization rate for children is 49.7 per 100,000. Rates were highest in the 0 to 4 age group at 69.2 per 100,000. Next were 12 to 17 at 63.7 and lowest were 5 to 11 at 24.0. While the rate of hospitalizations has increased significantly in the last month and were five times higher in August than June, this does not show that Delta is more severe in children; it is strictly a function of higher overall case numbers in the unvaccinated. The rates of ICU admission, needing oxygen, requiring ventilation, and death in children are not statistically different now from what we've seen in the past; only the number of overall infections has increased. This makes sense when you consider that the greatest risk factor for severe disease is unvaccinated status and children under 12 are not eligible at all for vaccination.

The hospitalization rate in unvaccinated 12 to 17 year-olds was 10 times that among fully vaccinated adolescents in this age group. Regions of the country where vaccination rates are lowest are the regions where child infections, emergency room visits for children, and hospitalizations are the highest. The best predictor of hospitalization for older children is whether they've been vaccinated; the best predictor for young children is whether their parents have been vaccinated. So if you have this large vulnerable population and it is surrounded by unvaccinated (i.e., at risk) adults, there's going to be a problem. Going back to school under these conditions, especially in places where schools are not taking mitigation very seriously—which just happen, not at all coincidentally, to be places with low vaccination rates—is going to be a challenge. We're watching that play out now.

We have a report from the CDC on an outbreak linked to a church camp and associated men's conference held in Illinois in June. Even though all of the participants at camp and conference were of an age to be eligible for vaccination, the events did not require vaccination or testing, and participants were not masked. There have been at least 180 infections in three states traced to these gatherings with five, all unvaccinated, hospitalized. About a third of the infected people were not actually in attendance at the camp, which again points out the ways in which decisions made by one group of people redound on others who didn't get a vote. Around 1000 people in four states were exposed before it was over, and of course, the counting will continue for some time as cases turn up. Twenty-nine of the 180+ infected were vaccinated. There were no deaths. There have been other more limited outbreaks associated with other youth camps, but the camps which used testing, masking, contact tracing, and distancing have had far smaller outbreaks with far fewer cases and exposed individuals. We have come to understand that children can, indeed, serve as the spark that ignites an outbreak; we must do better in our efforts to control transmission when children gather.

An enormous—and enormously consequential—study of the effect of masks in mitigating transmission of Covid-19 has been completed in Bangladesh. The preprint is under peer review now and is not yet available to the public, so I am working from a summary here. This was a randomized, controlled trial conducted by a huge (hundreds) international team and involved 340,000 adults in 600 villages in that country. Bangladesh requires masks, but compliance is quite limited. The villagers were divided into an intervention group (178,000) who were subjected to strategies to increase mask wearing and provided with free surgical masks to wear and a control group (163,000) where there were no interventions. The research team actually fanned out into the villages to observe for themselves how much compliance there was, and they found interventions did increase mask-wearing by 28.8 percent—from 13 to 42 percent, although this means there were still a whole lot of people in the intervention group not wearing them. Then the villagers were tracked for seropositivity (tests for antibodies indicating the person had become infected) or symptomatic infection. The findings were a 9.3 percent reduction in symptomatic seroprevalence and a further 11.9 percent reduction in symptoms. That's a large effect from a 28 percent increase in mask wearing in a situation where most folks still were going around unmasked. It should also be noted that there was no attempt to track asymptomatic infections, so it seems likely—almost certain—the effect is greater than shown. The study was conducted between November, 2020, and April, 2021. The interventions were ended after 10 weeks, but the effect persisted after they ended. This is being viewed by many experts who've seen a preview as gold-standard evidence for the efficacy of surgical masks in reducing transmission.

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We have a new study published in the Lancet Infectious Diseases on Wednesday from a team at King's College London. It deals with what's often called long Covid, that sometimes debilitating combination of symptoms lingering well after recovery, including fatigue, brain fog, shortness of breath, and other symptoms, frequently even in folks who had quite mild cases of Covid-19. The study looked at the medical records of more than 1.2 million adults in the UK's Covid Symptom Study which can track this sort of thing using a mobile app participants use to log test results, symptoms, and vaccination records.

Findings include that, of the almost one million fully vaccinated people in the study, 0.2 percent reported breakthrough infection. They were about twice as likely to be asymptomatic as those who were unvaccinated. The incidence of long Covid, symptoms lingering at least four weeks after recovery, was halved compared with infected unvaccinated people.

There was another study published Wednesday in the Journal of the American Society for Nephrology from the St. Louis Health Care System. It was intended to assess the likelihood of kidney outcomes as a part of long Covid. They looked at 1.7 million US Veterans and assessed the risks of damage to kidney functioning. Findings were that in the first 30 days of infection, there existed an increased risk of kidney outcomes and that this risk "increased according to the severity of the acute infection." This was seen even in those who did not suffer acute kidney injury in the acute phase of the infection, including people who were never hospitalized at all. They caution that, with the enormous number of people who have been infected and the odds of post-acute sequelae, we need to give attention well into the future to providing the means to provide care for people with these outcomes. Long-term treatment for serious kidney injury is enormously expensive and severely taxes system and personal resources as well; looks to me as though these sequelae could represent a real strain on our health care resources for years to come.

Another research report, this one published a week ago in the New England Journal of Medicine, comes from a research team in Israel who looked at medical records for nearly two million people to assess the risks for complication from the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. They used a matched-samples design to compare vaccinated and unvaccinated persons and to compare SARS-CoV-2-infected persons to uninfected persons, matching for sociodemographic and clinical variables. The vaccinated and control groups each contained just over 880,000 people; infected and control groups each contained just over 173,000 people. They assembled a list of possible adverse events VAERS and some other reporting mechanisms and scientific publications and assessed those over a period of 42 days following vaccination.

Findings were that the "vaccine was not associated with an elevated risk of most of the adverse events examined," but was associated with "excess risk of myocarditis" of about 3 excess events per 100,000 persons, primarily among young men. We should note here that the cases of myocarditis seen were easily treated with full patient recovery, and there have been no deaths. They contextualized the myocarditis risk by comparing that 3 events per 100,000 to the excess risk of myocarditis in people infected with SARS-CoV-2 of 11.0 events per 100,000 persons and noting that, additionally, "SARS-CoV-2 infection was also estimated to substantially increase the risk of several adverse events for which vaccination was not found to increase the risk, including an estimated excess risk of arrhythmia 166.1 events per 100,000 persons, acute kidney injury (125.4 events), pulmonary embolism (61.7 events), deep-vein thrombosis (43.0 events), myocardial infarction (25.1 events), pericarditis (10.9 events), and intracranial hemorrhage (7.6 events)."

[Glossary for those who need one: arrhythmia – abnormal heart rhythm; pulmonary embolism – blood clot clogging up an artery in the lungs; deep-vein thrombosis – blood clot clogging up deep-tissue veins, usually in the legs; myocardial infarction – what's known as a heart attack; pericarditis – inflammation of the membrane enclosing the heart; intracranial hemorrhage – a kind of stroke.]

Additionally, there was the unexpected effect that the vaccine "appears to be protective against conditions such as anemia [a deficiency of red blood cells] and intracranial hemorrhage." Because those are complications of Covid-19, the researchers speculated that this protective effect might actually be due to protection against undiagnosed Covid-19 which was causing those conditions in the unvaccinated group.

Dr. Grace Lee, pediatrician at Stanford University and chair of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, put these findings into context, speaking with CNN: "Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines may be associated with myocarditis, but they can also prevent cases of myocarditis, acute kidney



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injury, arrhythmia, and thromboembolic disease. The key to comparing these risks depends on the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection to an individual person, and that risk can vary according to place and over time. Given the current state of the global pandemic, however, the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 appears to be inevitable." There was a time when we could say that, if you get vaccinated, you are definitely going to be exposed to whatever risks that carries, whereas if you don't get vaccinated, you may or may not ever be infected and exposed to the risks of infection. It's not looking that way anymore. With Delta, it appears infection is going to be a near 100 percent certainty for those who remain unvaccinated.

The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee has scheduled a meeting for September 17, the purpose of which is to discuss vaccine booster doses for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. The companies applied last month for approval of the third dose, and then Moderna applied on Wednesday. The Moderna application asks for approval of a half-dose as a booster since they are seeing a robust response with the smaller dose. While the administration has been planning for a rollout of third doses as soon as September 20, they have also said they are awaiting regulatory approval before making a move; that's what this meeting is about. It appears this week that the upcoming meeting will address only the Pfizer/BioNTech boosters; the Moderna data that came in this week apparently presents some complexities that will take more time to resolve. It appears one issue is around dosage—whether the half-dose Moderna is reported to be recommending is appropriate; there may be other questions as well about the adequacy of the data submitted. The submission is fairly recent, so it may just take more time to work through the mass of information provided. The meeting, however broad or narrow its agenda, will be streamed and open to the public.

I don't think anyone is questioning the safety of a third dose; but there is not general agreement whether we need a third dose at this time for either of the mRNA vaccines. I am hearing a lot of opinion on either side of that question. There are those who say there's not much evidence we need boosting yet; on the other hand, there are some studies which indicate an uptick in breakthroughs in health care workers who were among the first vaccinated. I'm not sure which side will prevail—not even sure who I think should prevail. Maybe they'll split the difference and start boosters in older people, but hold off for more data on younger ones—part of the reason for that might be in the study I report below. And as noted above, it is possible only recipients of one of the current vaccines will be covered by whatever decision is made for the present. In any case, not being an expert in the field myself, I'm going to sit here with no opinion at all and wait to see what they come up with.

I will add here that I read a paper from a research group from Maccabi Health Care Services in Tel Aviv and Yale School of Public Health looking at Israeli medical data covering the first three weeks of August from an HMO for patients over 60 years of age, some of whom were given third doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and some of whom were not. Findings were that the rate of positive tests were reduced by 48 to 68 percent in the second week after the booster shot was administered and by 70 to 84 percent in the third week. It appears the effect against severe disease was even greater, showing a 15-fold reduction in risk, but because the number of severe cases seen over such a short time period was very small, it's difficult to draw firm conclusions about this aspect. We should note here that this reduction is in people already fully vaccinated, so the risk reduction is not from an unvaccinated state, but from a vaccinated one; it is further reduction on top of the protection that already existed in the subjects. Now, before we get too excited about any of this, we need to recognize that this boost in response is precisely what we expect an additional dose to deliver—there's a reason it's called a booster dose, after all. What we don't know from this study is how durable this effect will be or the optimal interval for administering that third dose. The thing is there's only one way to find out—wait some more to see what happens in Israel since they went first. I don't know how this informs the decision the FDA has ahead of it either since it doesn't really address the question whether that added protection is actually needed.

There is another variant designated by the WHO as a variant of interest and given a Greek-letter name, Mu, on August 30, but not elevated to the status of a variant of concern, which would indicate "a significant impact on transmissibility, severity and/or immunity" according to the WHO. It's genomic designation is B.1.621, and it was first identified in Colombia in January. It has been identified in over 39 countries,

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including the US, South Korea, Japan, Ecuador, Canada, and parts of Europe. There are some mutations here that are considered to require further study, particularly those associated in some variants with an increase in resistance to natural immunity and vaccines; but we don't know yet how those interact in the real world. Prevalence is increasing in Columbia (39 percent of cases) and Ecuador (13 percent). At present, around 2000 cases have showed up in the US, mostly in California, Texas, New York, and Florida, so it is not making waves here. If it begins to gain ground on Delta here, that would be a very bad sign because it would mean either that this is so much more transmissible even than Delta that it can out-compete it on those grounds (which would be disastrous) or that it is resistant to antibodies induced by either prior infection or vaccination (which would be catastrophic). Let's hope this guy just quietly dies away again. Once again, the only way to find out for sure is to wait.

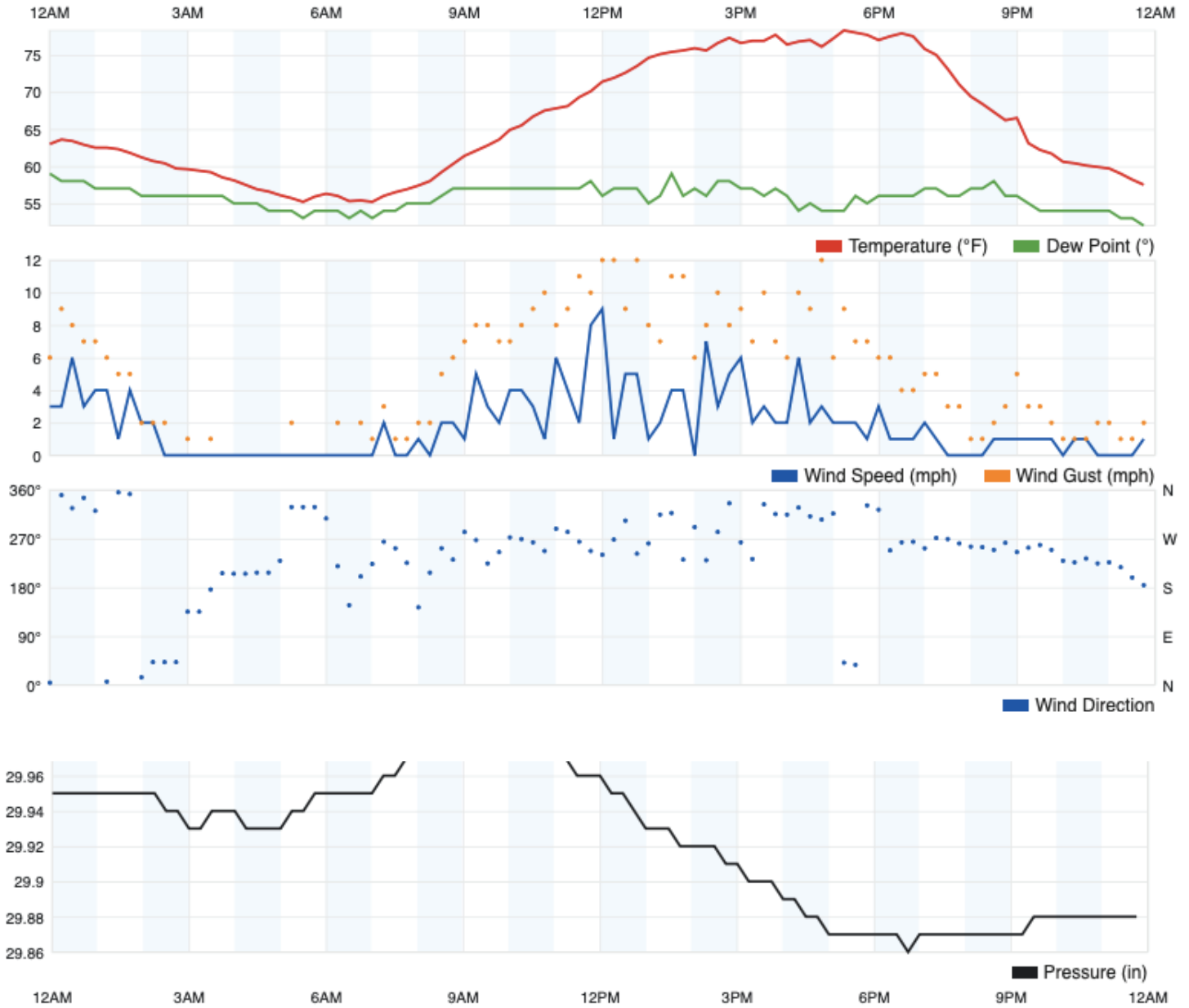
That's it for today. Who knew a year ago, going into Labor Day weekend, that 12 months later, we'd still be dealing with the kind of case rate and the deaths numbers we're seeing now? Who knew back then when the numbers marking these Updates were under 200 instead of creeping upward toward 500 that we'd still be meeting like this? With everything that's changed in the interim, a lot of the important stuff hasn't changed. We know how to stop this, and this year we have an additional powerful tool we didn't have then, these vaccines. Please be safe this weekend so that future Labor Days don't have to evoke memories of a sad loss for your family.

Take care. We'll talk next week.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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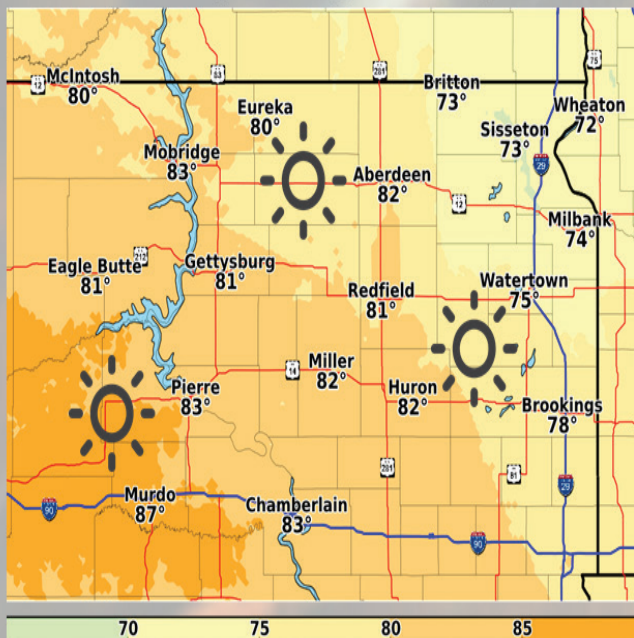
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Today	Tonight	Labor Day	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
High: 80 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 88 °F	Low: 55 °F	High: 75 °F

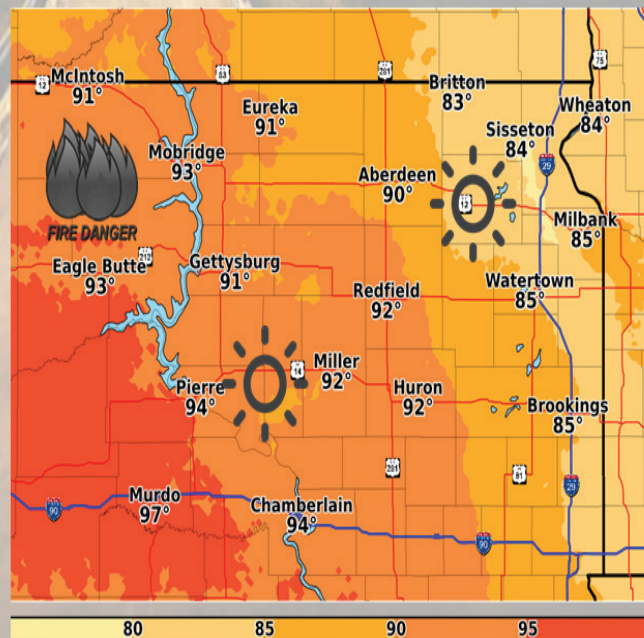
## Sunny, Warming Through Labor Day

Pleasant conditions today will become summer-like on Monday. Elevated grassland fire danger is anticipated on Monday across north central SD as well, thanks to dry air and breezy west-southwesterly winds, particularly in the late afternoon and early evening.

### Today's High Temps



### Monday's High Temps



National Weather Service Aberdeen, South Dakota

Updated: 9/5/2021 5:02 AM Central

Pleasant conditions today will become summer-like on Monday. Elevated grassland fire danger is anticipated on Monday across north central SD as well, thanks to dry air and breezy west-southwesterly winds, particularly during the late afternoon and early evening.

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## Today in Weather History

September 5, 1983: In the late afternoon and early evening, hail up to 2, and ½ inches in diameter pounded crops, trees, buildings, and windows resulting in extensive damage in Spink, Beadle, Turner, and Clay Counties. Trees were stripped of numerous branches broken off.

1666: The Great Fire of London started on September 2nd and continued through September 5th. The fire spread rapidly due to strong westerly winds. This fire consumed 13,200 homes, 87 parish churches, and St. Paul's Cathedral.

1925 - The temperature at Centerville, AL, soars to 112 degrees to establish a state record. Every reporting station in Alabama was 100 degrees or above that afternoon. (The Weather Channel)

1929: Early season snowfall occurred in the mountains of Wyoming and the Black Hills of South Dakota on September 5th and 6th. The highest snowfall amount was 16 inches in Fox Park, Wyoming.

1933: A Category 3 hurricane made landfall on South Padre Island, Texas during the late evening hours on September 4th, or Labor Day. The storm caused 40 fatalities and nearly \$17 million in damages. With the storm making landfall during a holiday weekend, fatalities could have been much higher. The following is from the report of the official in charge at Corpus Christi, Texas: "Probably never before in the history of Texas hurricanes have such widespread and early warnings been given as were received from Washington in advance of this one. The telegram of Saturday, September 2, warning all persons to avoid inaccessible places over the weekend probably saved thousands of lives."

1950: Hurricane Easy was an erratic and unpredictable hurricane that lingered over the Tampa Bay area for days, dropping torrential rains and causing damage especially in Cedar Key, Florida where the storm eventually made landfall. This hurricane dumped 38.7 inches of rain in 24 hours in Yankeetown, a record for the U.S. at the time, and caused \$3.3 million in damage. Total rainfall amounts in Yankeetown was 45.20 inches.

1975 - Strong winds reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust resulting in a 22-car chain reaction accident on Interstate 10 near Toltec AZ. Two persons were killed, and 14 others were injured. (The Weather Channel)

1978: Tropical Depression Norman became the most recent tropical system to make landfall in California near Long Beach as an extra-tropical storm.

1987 - Thunderstorms over the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast States drenched Charleston, SC, with 5.50 inches of rain, and a total of 13.50 inches in two days, flooding homes, and leaving roads and bridges under water. (The National Weather Summary) A tropical storm which formed off the South Atlantic coast was responsible for torrential rains over coastal regions of South Carolina. Between the 30th of August and the 8th of September, Charleston SC received 18.44 inches of rain. The heavy rains caused extensive flooding around the city of Charleston, seriously damaged cotton crops in the eastern part of the state, and resulted in an unusually high number of mosquitos. (Storm Data)

1988 - Five days of heavy rain commenced in west central Florida. Up to 20 inches of rain in four days resulted in extensive urban flooding, and evacuation of 1000 homes. Flooding claimed four lives, and caused more than five million dollars property damage. (The National Weather Summary)(Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced six to ten inches of rain in south central Kansas between 6 AM and Noon. Serious flooding was reported around Wichita, with water four feet deep along some roads. A cold front crossing the Northern High Plains Region produced wind gusts to 63 mph at Sheridan WY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1996: Hurricane Fran made landfall near the tip of Cape Fear, North Carolina with maximum sustained winds near 115 mph on the evening of September 5th. Fran was responsible for 26 deaths and was at the time the most expensive natural disaster ever in North Carolina's history.

2017: Hurricane Irma became a category 5 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 180 mph. This made Irma one of strongest hurricane ever observed in the open Atlantic Ocean.

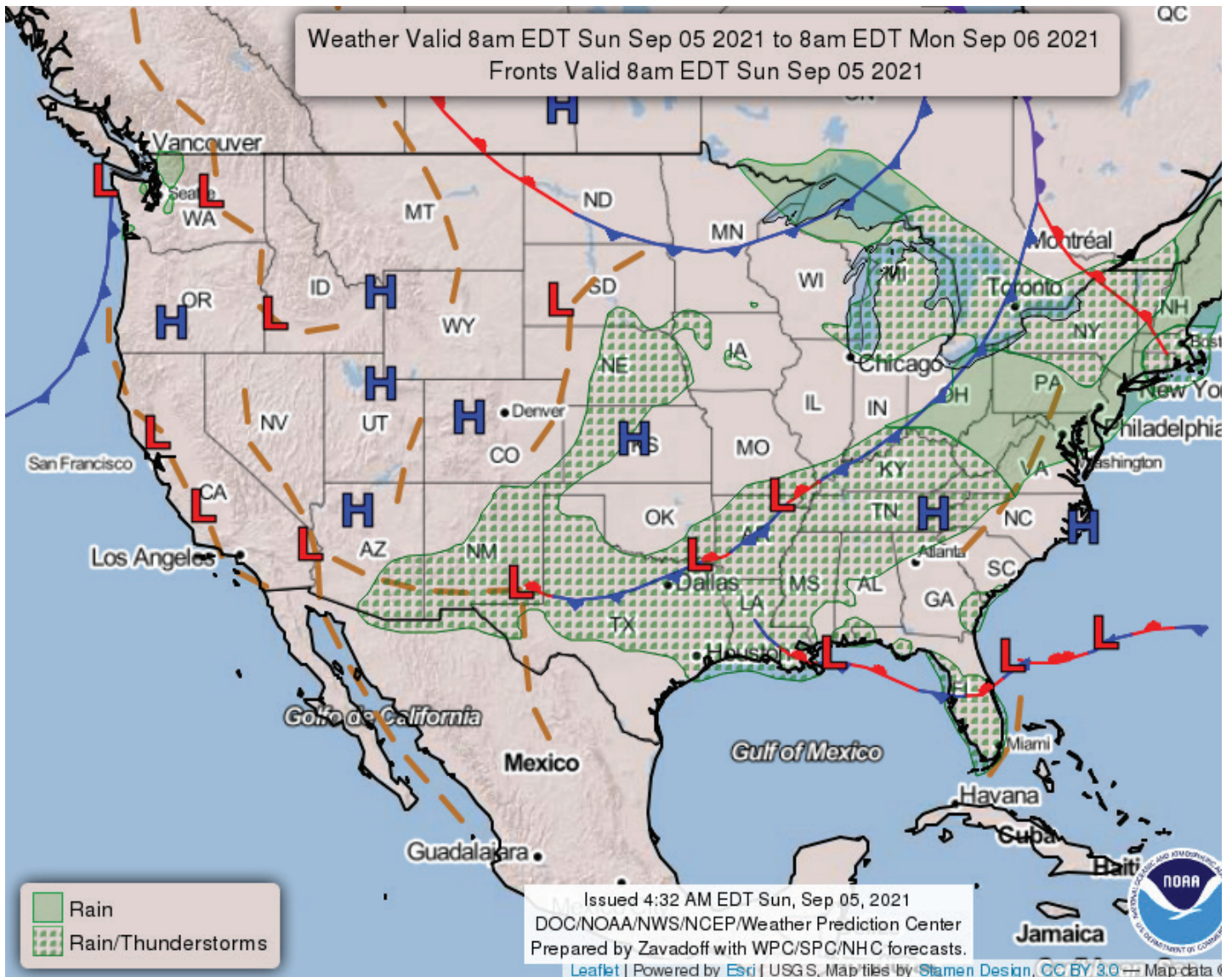
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 78.3 °F at 5:15 PM**  
**Low Temp: 55.2 °F at 7:00 AM**  
**Wind: 12 mph at 4:45 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

**Record High: 102° in 1945**  
**Record Low: 32° in 1962**  
**Average High: 79°F**  
**Average Low: 51°F**  
**Average Precip in Sept.: 0.34**  
**Precip to date in Sept.: 1.77**  
**Average Precip to date: 16.68**  
**Precip Year to Date: 14.91**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:03:55 PM**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:59:07 AM**



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## WORDS YOU CAN DEPEND ON

One morning as I was leaving my first speech class, my wise teacher stopped me and offered me a few words of advice on the importance of being well prepared to serve God. During our conversation she advised me to take every course that had anything to do with speaking or writing. "Larry," she said in a voice that reflected sincerity and compassion, "it does not matter how much you know about the Bible, if you can't explain it so people can understand it, accept it, and live it, you'll be letting God down." It made good sense to me then, and even more sense to me now. Thankfully, I followed her recommendation carefully.

One of the classes I took emphasized the difficulty of people hearing what a speaker says, interpreting it correctly, and passing it on. It is easy to hear what someone says but quite difficult to pass it on without changing the words and the meaning that the speaker intended. When this happens, something is lost in "transmission," and it could be a matter of life and death if the message passed on is incorrect or inconsistent.

The importance of the integrity of God's message is clearly presented in Psalm 93:5, "Your statues stand firm!" That means "Whatever God said is so." His Word contains no errors, no mistakes, and no information that can lead us astray if accepted as written. In fact, the word for statues emphasizes the fact that Scripture rests on the integrity of God our Creator. His statements, promises, warnings, and commands are not to be changed to meet the desires of man but to proclaim and present the everlasting covenant of His love, mercy, grace, salvation, and hope between God and man.

Prayer: We thank You, Lord, for the trustworthiness of Your Word that declares the Way, the Truth and the Life. Help us to know it, love it, and share it. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Your statutes, Lord, stand firm; holiness adorns your house for endless days. Psalm 93:5

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## 2021 Community Events

- Cancelled** Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)  
03/27/2021 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)  
04/10/2021 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm  
04/24/2021 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)  
04/25/2021 Princess Prom (Sunday after GHS Prom)  
05/01/2021 Lions Club Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)  
05/31/2021 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)  
6/7-9/2021 St. John's Lutheran Church VBS  
06/17/2021 Groton Transit Fundraiser, 4-7 p.m.  
06/18/2021 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament at Olive Grove  
06/19/2021 U8 Baseball Tournament  
06/19/2021 **Postponed to Aug. 28th:** Lions Crazy Golf Fest at Olive Grove Golf Course, Noon  
06/26/2021 U10 Baseball Tournament  
06/27/2021 U12 Baseball Tournament  
07/04/2021 Firecracker Golf Tournament at Olive Grove  
07/11/2021 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 10am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)  
07/22/2021 Pro-Am Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/30/2021-08/03/2021 State "B" American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton  
08/06/2021 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course  
08/13/2021 Groton Basketball Golf Tournament  
**Cancelled** 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)  
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



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## News from the Associated Press

### Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Brandon Valley 33, Sioux Falls Jefferson 21

Harrisburg 44, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 24

Rapid City Stevens 43, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 33

Sioux Falls Lincoln 31, Watertown 26

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

### Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Hill City def. Belle Fourche, 18-25, 25-10, 25-12

Pierre def. Aberdeen Central, 25-21, 25-13, 25-21

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Harrisburg, 25-21, 25-21, 25-19

Todd County def. McLaughlin, 25-18, 25-12, 25-18

Gillette Invite=

Cheyenne East, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 30-25, 25-16

Rapid City Central def. Campbell County, Wyo., 25-22, 25-19

Rapid City Stevens def. Campbell County, Wyo., 25-20, 25-23

Thunder Basin, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 29-27, 25-15

Gregory Invite=

Championship=

Gregory def. Chamberlain, 25-8, 25-14

Fifth Place=

Colome def. St. Francis Indian, 25-15, 25-11

Pool 1=

Edgemont def. Colome, 25-20, 25-22

Gregory def. Colome, 25-20, 25-13

Gregory def. Edgemont, 25-21, 25-18

Pool 2=

Chamberlain def. Lyman, 25-22, 25-9

Chamberlain def. St. Francis Indian, 25-5, 25-15

Lyman def. St. Francis Indian, 25-22, 25-13

Third Place=

Edgemont def. Lyman, 25-13, 25-23

Stanley County Triangular=

Timber Lake def. Stanley County, 25-18, 23-25, 25-18, 25-22

White River def. Stanley County, 25-22, 23-25, 14-25, 25-21, 15-12

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

02-06-32-34-35

(two, six, thirty-two, thirty-four, thirty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$72,000

Lotto America

01-05-24-25-28, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 3

(one, five, twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-eight; Star Ball: four; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.7 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$345 million

Powerball

32-35-40-52-54, Powerball: 1, Power Play: 5

(thirty-two, thirty-five, forty, fifty-two, fifty-four; Powerball: one; Power Play: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$367 million

## Crash victim recalls terror after Mississippi road collapse

Associated Press undefined

LUCEDALE, Miss. (AP) — A teenager said she could hear the terrifying sounds of other vehicles crashing around — and on top of — the pickup truck where she and her mother were trapped after the truck plunged into a dark, muddy pit when a Mississippi highway collapsed during torrential rain brought by Hurricane Ida.

"I saw a black hole, then I blacked out and I woke up and my mom was leaned over toward me. She was choking on her blood and she couldn't breathe or anything," 16-year-old Emily Williams of Wiggins, Mississippi, told WLOX-TV in a video call from her hospital room.

Williams managed to sit her 39-year-old mother, Amanda Williams, upright and stop her from choking. But, she said, she could still hear the chaos outside her family's truck.

"I remember hearing a car coming and then I heard a crash and I heard an engine going from a car because it was on top of us," Emily Williams said. "It didn't really move us really much, but then I heard the screeching of another car's tires. I heard people screaming and then it crashed."

Two people were killed and nine were injured late Monday when seven vehicles plunged, one after another, into a deep hole where a section of the two-lane Mississippi Highway 26 collapsed outside Lucedale. The Mississippi Highway Patrol initially said 10 were injured, but later released a list of nine names.

Amanda Williams also remains hospitalized.

Layla Jamison of Lucedale, a 17-year-old senior at George County High, was in the car that landed on the Williams' truck. Emily's aunt, Shanna Bordelon, said Jamison's car landed without crushing the cab where Emily and Amanda sat.

Emily Williams said waiting in the collapse zone for help was terrifying.

"In all honesty, I was ready to give up," she said. "I was like, 'We're not going to make it out of here. No one is going to find us. Everybody is just going to keep piling in.'"

Emily's father arrived, and she said once she heard him screaming from above, she knew she would be rescued. She is recovering from a torn colon, a broken leg and other injuries. Still, she said: "I feel so lucky."

Mississippi Highway Patrol Cpl. Cal Robertson said some of the vehicles ended up stacked on top of each other as they crashed into the abyss, which opened up in an area without street lights. Ida dumped as much as 13 inches (33 centimeters) of rain as it blew through Mississippi, the National Weather Service said.

State troopers, emergency workers and rescue teams responded to the crash site about 60 miles (95 kilometers) northeast of Biloxi, to find both the east and westbound lanes collapsed. Robertson said the hole removed about 50 to 60 feet (15 to 18 meters) of roadway, and was 20 to 30 feet (6 to 9 meters) deep.

The vehicles were later lifted out by a crane. A drone video published by the Sun Herald showed how a

raised berm beneath the road washed away, leaving a red-clay scar that runs for hundreds of feet, from a cemetery on one side into a wooded area on the other.

## UAE rolls out plan to invest in economy, liberalize laws

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United Arab Emirates announced on Sunday a major plan to stimulate its economy and liberalize stringent residency rules for expatriates, as the country seeks to overhaul its finances and attract foreign residents and capital.

The nation's plan to lure foreign talent over the next decades reflects an emerging contrast with the other sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf that are growing increasingly protectionist as they try to diversify their oil-bound economies. Now marking its 50th anniversary, the UAE is seeking to accelerate its economic and social reforms to rebrand for a post-pandemic future. Portraying the country as an open-minded, bustling trade and finance hub, the government promised to pour \$13.6 billion into the economy in the next year and \$150 billion by 2030.

"We are building the new 50 years' economy," Abdulla bin Touq, the economy minister, said in an interview. "Anyone who is trying to be more conservative and trying to close their markets, the value is going to be only in the short-term, but in the long-term, they're harming their economies."

Buried within the raft of flashy economic development initiatives on Sunday was a far more practical — and drastic — change to the country's visa system that governs the legions of foreign workers from Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere who power the country's economy.

Since the UAE's independence, the state has tied employment to residency status, lending employers outsized power and forcing people to immediately leave the country once they lost their jobs.

"We want to rebuild the whole system ... so that the residency system is attracting people and making sure they feel the UAE is home for them," bin Touq said. "Openness is something which we're proud of."

The new plans give residents an additional three months to seek other jobs after being fired, allow parents to sponsor their children's visas until the age of 25, and ease visa restrictions on freelancers, widows and divorced people, among other things. It's a subtle shift from the Gulf Arab state's traditional way of treating its vast foreign labor force as an expendable underclass.

Ministers also said they sought to double the UAE's economy in the next decade through major trade agreements with countries including Israel, Turkey, United Kingdom and India.

## Kashmir leader's family charged under India anti-terror law

By AIJAZ HUSSAIN Associated Press

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — Police in Indian-controlled Kashmir charged family members of late resistance leader Syed Ali Geelani under a harsh anti-terror law for raising anti-India slogans and wrapping his body in the Pakistani flag, officials said Sunday.

Geelani, who died Wednesday at age 91, was the emblem of Kashmir's defiance against New Delhi and had been under house arrest for years.

His son, Naseem, said Indian authorities buried Geelani's body in a local cemetery without any family members present after police snatched his body from the home. Police denied that and called it "baseless rumors" by "some vested interests."

A video widely shared on social media purportedly showed Geelani's relatives, mostly women, frantically trying to prevent armed police from forcing their way into the room where his body, wrapped in a Pakistani flag, was being kept. It showed women wailing and screaming as police took the body and locked his family and relatives inside the room.

Police said unspecified family members and some others were charged Saturday under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. They have not yet been taken into custody.

The anti-terror law was amended in 2019 to allow the government to designate an individual as a terrorist. Police can detain a person for six months without producing any evidence, and the accused can

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subsequently be imprisoned for up to seven years. Rights activists have called the law draconian.

Geelani's son Naseem said Sunday that a police officer visited the family on Saturday and informed them a case had been registered. Naseem did not provide further details about the meeting, but said there were scuffles as the police removed his father's body.

"Amid the chaos, we didn't really know what was happening. We were mourning," said Naseem.

Kashmir has long been a flashpoint between India and Pakistan, which administer parts of the Himalayan region while claiming it entirely.

Geelani spearheaded Kashmir's movement for the right to self-determination and was a staunch proponent of merging Kashmir with Pakistan. For many in Kashmir and beyond, he was an enduring icon of defiance against India.

India describes the armed rebellion as Islamabad's proxy war and state-sponsored terrorism. Most Muslim Kashmiris consider it a legitimate freedom struggle and support the rebel goal that the territory be united, either under Pakistani rule or as an independent country.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan slammed India's removal and hasty burial of Geelani's body as well as the case against the family, calling it "shameful" in a tweet Sunday.

Rebels have been fighting against Indian rule since 1989. The region is one of the most heavily militarized in the world. Tens of thousands of civilians, rebels and government forces have been killed in the raging conflict.

Tensions flared in the region in 2019 after New Delhi stripped Kashmir's semi-autonomy, scrapped its statehood and removed inherited protections on land and jobs. Authorities have since brought a slew of new laws, which critics and many Kashmiris fear could change the region's demographics.

Meanwhile Sunday, authorities eased some restrictions that had been imposed since Geelani's death, allowing private vehicles on roads and vendors to operate in some parts of Srinagar. However, most shops and businesses stayed closed as government forces patrolled roads and streets in the city.

Mobile phones were restored late Friday, but mobile internet and restrictions on the assembly of people continued in many parts of the Kashmir Valley.

Paramilitary soldiers remained stationed outside the graveyard where Geelani was buried.

Ruwa Shah, Geelani's granddaughter, wrote on Twitter they were horrified by "what followed after our old man passed away." His "home was a jail for over a decade and now his graveyard is a jail too," she said.

Follow Aijaz Hussain on Twitter at [twitter.com/hussain\\_aijaz](https://twitter.com/hussain_aijaz)

## **Blinken and Austin to visit Gulf to address postwar stresses**

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top U.S. national security officials will see how the failed war in Afghanistan may be reshaping America's relationships in the Middle East as they meet with key allies in the Persian Gulf and Europe this week.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin are traveling to the Gulf separately, leaving Sunday. They will talk with leaders who are central to U.S. efforts to prevent a resurgence of extremist threats in Afghanistan, some of whom were partners in the 20-year fight against the Taliban.

Together, the Austin and Blinken trips are meant to reassure Gulf allies that President Joe Biden's decision to end the U.S. war in Afghanistan in order to focus more on other security challenges like China and Russia does not foretell an abandonment of U.S. partners in the Middle East. The U.S. military has had a presence in the Gulf for decades, including the Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain. Biden has not suggested ending that presence, but he — like the Trump administration before him — has called China the No. 1 security priority, along with strategic challenges from Russia.

"There's nothing China or Russia would rather have, would want more, in this competition than the United States to be bogged down another decade in Afghanistan," Biden said in the hours after the last U.S. troops left.

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In announcing his Gulf trip, Austin told a Pentagon news conference that staying focused on terrorist threats means relentless efforts against "any threat to the American people from any place," even as the United States places a new focus on strategic challenges from China.

Blinken travels to Qatar and will also stop in Germany to see Afghan evacuees at Ramstein air base who are awaiting clearance to travel to the United States. While there he will join a virtual meeting with counterparts from 20 nations on the way ahead in Afghanistan.

"The secretary will convey the United States' gratitude to the German government for being an invaluable partner in Afghanistan for the past 20 years and for German cooperation on transit operations moving people out of Afghanistan," spokesman Ned Price said Friday.

Austin plans to start his trip by thanking the leaders of Qatar for their cooperation during the Kabul airlift that helped clear an initially clogged pipeline of desperate evacuees. In addition to permitting the use of al-Udeid air base for U.S. processing of evacuees, Qatar agreed to host the American diplomatic mission that withdrew from Kabul at war's end. The Qataris also have offered a hand to help reopen the Kabul airport in cooperation with the Taliban.

During a stop in Bahrain, Austin plans to speak with Marines who spent weeks at Kabul airport executing a frantic and dangerous evacuation of Afghans, Americans and others. Eleven Marines were killed and 15 were wounded in a suicide bombing at the airport on Aug. 26. That attack killed a total of 13 U.S. service members and scores of Afghan civilians.

The Pentagon chief also planned to visit Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and to meet with senior leaders in a region he knows well as a retired Army general and former head of U.S. Central Command with responsibility for all military operations there.

Saudi Arabia was notably absent from the group of Gulf states who helped facilitate the U.S.-led evacuation from Kabul airport. Riyadh's relations with Washington are strained over Biden's efforts to revive a nuclear deal with Iran, among other issues. Just days before the U.S. left Afghanistan, the Saudis signed a military cooperation agreement with Russia.

Biden said his decision to get out of Afghanistan after 20 years was part of a plan to "turn the page" on an approach to foreign policy since 2001 that he believes kept the U.S. military in Afghanistan far too long. Allies in the Gulf, where extremist threats are at the doorstep, want to know what the next U.S. policy page looks like.

In Europe, too, allies are assessing what the lost war in Afghanistan and its immediate aftermath mean for their collective interests, including the years-old question of whether Europe should become less reliant on the United States.

"We need to increase our capacity to act autonomously when and where necessary," Josep Borrell Fontelles, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, wrote on Twitter on Thursday.

America's European allies in NATO had more troops in Afghanistan than did the United States when Biden announced in April that he would withdraw by September. The Europeans had almost no choice but to join the exit, given the limits of their combat power so far from home, and they were largely dependent on U.S. air transport to get out, although they did fly some of the evacuation sorties.

Some NATO allies doubted the wisdom of Biden's withdrawal decision, but it's uncertain that the Afghanistan crisis will weaken the ties that bind the United States and Europe. In an essay, two of the Center for Strategic and International Security's Europe experts — Rachel Ellehuus and Pierre Morcos — wrote that the crisis does reveal "inconvenient truths" about the trans-Atlantic relationship.

"For Europeans, it has exposed both their inability to change the decision calculus of the United States and powerlessness to defend their own interests (for example, evacuate their own citizens and allies) without the support of Washington," they wrote.

Germany, Spain, Italy and other European nations are allowing the U.S. to use their military bases to temporarily house Afghans who were airlifted out of Kabul but have not been approved for resettlement in the United States or elsewhere. Bahrain and Qatar made similar accommodations. Together, these ar-

rangements relieved strain on the evacuation operation from Kabul that initially was so acute that the airlift had to be suspended for several hours because there was no place to take the evacuees.

## The Latest: Pope urges countries to take in Afghan refugees

The Associated Press undefined

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is encouraging countries to welcome Afghan refugees who are seeking a new life.

During his appearance to the public in St. Peter's Square on Sunday, Francis also prayed that displaced persons inside Afghanistan receive assistance and protection.

"In these tumultuous moments, in which Afghans are seeking refuge, I pray for the most vulnerable among them, I pray so that many countries welcome and protect all those seeking a new life," Francis said.

The pope didn't cite the Taliban or their policies, but added: "may young Afghans receive an education, which is essential for human development."

He concluded by expressing hope that all Afghans, whether in their homeland, in transit, or in countries taking them in, may be able to "live with dignity, in peace, in brotherhood with their neighbors."

### MORE ON AFGHANISTAN:

- Over 24 hours in Kabul, brutality, trauma, moments of grace
- US: Afghan evacuees who fail initial screening Kosovo-bound
- Rescue groups: US tally misses hundreds left in Afghanistan
- US expects to admit more than 50,000 evacuated Afghans
- Afghan women demand rights as Taliban seek recognition

— Find more AP coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/afghanistan>

### HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

BERLIN — Angelina Jolie has expressed concern about the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

The actress, who is also a special envoy to the U.N.'s high commissioner for refugees, told a German newspaper Sunday she doesn't think the incoming government in Afghanistan could simply turn back the clock so that everything would be like 20 years ago. But she still has big worries about the situation for women there.

Jolie told the weekly *Welt am Sonntag*: "I'm thinking of all the women and girls who don't know now if they can go back to work or school. And I'm thinking of the young Afghans who are worried that they will lose their freedom."

Taliban fighters captured most of Afghanistan last month and celebrated the departure of the last U.S. forces after 20 years of war. The insurgent group must now govern a war-ravaged country that is heavily reliant on international aid.

BERLIN — A Taliban spokesperson has told a German newspaper that his group wants to establish diplomatic relations with Germany.

Zabihullah Mujahid tells the weekly *Welt am Sonntag* that "we want strong and official diplomatic relations to Germany."

The newspaper reported Sunday that the Taliban also hope for financial support from Germany as well as humanitarian aid and cooperation regarding Afghanistan's health care system, education and agriculture.

The German government has been reserved about establishing official ties with the Taliban. Officials say talks are needed to get the remaining former Afghan staffers who worked for the Germans out of the country.

According to the newspaper, Mujahid said it was unfortunate Germany had cooperated with the Americans during the war "but that has now been forgiven."

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**KABUL**, Afghanistan — Some domestic flights have resumed at Afghanistan's international airport in Kabul, with the state-run Ariana Afghan Airline operating flights to three provinces.

Shershah Stor, the airline's station manager at the airport, told The Associated Press on Sunday that the flights took place Saturday to western Herat, southern Kandahar and northern Balkh provinces. He said the flights were conducted without a functioning radar system at the airport.

Stor said three more flights are scheduled Sunday to the same provinces.

A team of Qatari and Turkish technicians arrived in Kabul last week to help restart operations at the airport, which the U.N. says is crucial to providing the country with humanitarian assistance. It remains to be seen, however, whether any commercial airlines will be willing to offer service.

**WASHINGTON** — The top U.S. military general has thanked members of the 10th Mountain Division for their service in Afghanistan during the evacuation of Americans, Afghans and others over the past several weeks.

Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with military police soldiers at the Rhine Ordnance Barracks in Germany on Saturday.

Standing outside talking to a group, he asked them, "You were there for the bombing?" Heads nodded and a chorus of voices answered, "yes, sir."

A suicide bombing by the Islamic State group near a gate at the Kabul airport more than a week ago killed 13 U.S. service members as well as 169 Afghans who were crowded around the entry, desperate to get on flights out of Afghanistan.

"You guys did an incredible job, all of you — Army, Navy, Marines, the Air Force — flying out 124,000 people. That's what you saved," Milley told the soldiers. He said they "showed enormous courage discipline and capability, working together. It's something you should always be proud of... This will be a moment that you'll always remember."

## Prince Charles' ex-aide quits charity role amid honor claims

**LONDON** (AP) — A former close aide to Prince Charles stepped down temporarily from his role as chief executive of a royal charity amid reports that he helped secure an honor for a Saudi donor.

The Sunday Times and Mail on Sunday newspapers reported that Michael Fawcett coordinated support for an honor for Saudi businessman Mahfouz Marei Mubarak bin Mahfouz.

The Times said the businessman donated sums of more than 1.5 million pounds (\$2.1 million) to The Prince's Foundation to fund heritage restoration projects of interest to Charles, including residences Charles used.

The report said Charles gave Mahfouz an honorary CBE, or Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, at a private ceremony in 2016. The Saudi denies wrongdoing.

The Prince's Foundation said in a statement that Fawcett offered to temporarily step down from active duties as the organization's chief executive while an investigation takes place. It said Fawcett will assist the investigation.

Fawcett began his royal service in 1981 as a footman to Queen Elizabeth II and later became Charles' assistant valet.

In 2003, he was accused of selling unwanted royal gifts but was cleared of financial misconduct allegations. He resigned from his position as valet but continued to work in other roles including as Charles' events planner.

## Group behind Hong Kong's Tiananmen vigil denies foreign ties

By HUIZHONG WU and KATIE TAM Associated Press

**HONG KONG** (AP) — The group behind the annual Tiananmen Square memorial vigil in Hong Kong said Sunday it will not cooperate with police conducting a national security investigation into the group's activi-

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ties, calling it an abuse of power.

Police notified the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China last month that it was under investigation for working for foreign interests, an accusation the group denied.

"This is a really bad precedent of the national security (police) abusing the power by arbitrarily labeling any civil organization as a foreign agent," Chow Han Tung, vice chairwoman of the alliance, said at a news conference called to address the police investigation.

"The alliance strongly denies that we are any foreign agents," Chow said. "We are an organization that was founded during the 1989 democratic movement, it was founded by the Hong Kong people."

The investigation is part of a broad crackdown on Hong Kong civil society following mass pro-democracy protests in 2019. Authorities have tightened control over the city with a sweeping national security law imposed by China's ruling Communist Party that effectively criminalized opposition to the government. The law and other changes have forced several civil organizations to disband or seen their leaders arrested.

The annual candlelight vigil honors the students who died when China's military violently suppressed massive pro-democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Authorities responded in the afternoon to the group's announcement with a warning and reiterated they needed information about "certain foreign agents" although they did not name anyone specifically.

"Endangering national security is a very serious crime. The damage is serious," said the city's Security Bureau in a statement. They added that not handing over information could lead to fines or imprisonment.

Hong Kong had been the only place in China allowed to hold such a commemoration, and in past years, tens of thousands of people gathered in Victoria Park to honor the dead. Smaller crowds gathered this year and in 2020 despite police banning the vigil, citing coronavirus restrictions on public gatherings.

Police had asked the alliance to hand over any information about groups they had worked with overseas or in Taiwan, as well as contact information. They did not mention what specific incidents prompted the investigation.

Chow said the alliance has not been able to reach a consensus on whether to disband. It plans to hold a general meeting on Sept. 25 to discuss the matter again.

In August, the prominent Hong Kong Civil Human Rights Front, made up of a slew of member organizations, said it could no longer operate and chose to disband. The group organized large protests in 2019.

More than 100 pro-democracy activists have been arrested under Hong Kong's national security law, which outlaws subversion, secession, terrorism and foreign collusion to interfere in the city's affairs. Many other activists have gone into exile abroad.

Critics say the law restricts freedoms Hong Kong was promised it could maintain for 50 years following the territory's 1997 handover to China from colonial Britain.

Wu reported from Taipei, Taiwan.

## 9/11: As the decades pass, the act of remembering evolves

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

SHANKSVILLE, Pa. (AP) — Across the vast field where the plane fell out of the sky so many years ago, all is quiet.

The hills around Shanksville seem to swallow sound. The plateau that Americans by the millions ascend to visit the Flight 93 National Memorial, to think of those who died in this southwestern Pennsylvania expanse, sits just above much of the landscape, creating a pocket of quiet precisely where quiet needs to be.

It is a place that encourages the act of remembering.

Twenty years have passed since United Flight 93 made its final descent, chaos unfolding aboard as buildings burned 300 miles to the east. Nearly one-fifth of the country is too young to remember firsthand the day that changed everything.

At the edge of the memorial's overlook, a burly man in a leather Harley Davidson vest talks to two companions. He points toward the patch where the plane hit. It is an intimate conversation, and it is hard to



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hear what he's saying.

But his first two words are clear:

"I remember ..."

Remembering is not merely a state of mind. As those who beseech us to never forget the Holocaust have long insisted, it is an act. And when loss and trauma are visited upon human beings, the act of remembering takes many forms.

Remembering is political. Those who disagree about the fate of Confederate statues across the American South demonstrate that, as do those who dispute how much the war on terror and its toll should be part of discussions about 9/11 memories.

Remembering wears many coats. It arrives in ground zero ceremonies and moments of silence and prayers upon prayers, both public and private. It shows itself in folk memorials like those erected at the sides of lonely roads to mark the sites of traffic deaths. It is embedded in the names of places, like the road that leads to the Flight 93 memorial — the Lincoln Highway. It surfaces in the retrieval of "flashbulb memories" — those where-were-you-when-this-happened moments that stick with us, sometimes accurately, sometimes not.

There are personal memories and cultural memories and political memories, and the line between them often blurs.

And for generations, remembering has been presented to us in monuments and memorials like Shanksville's, negotiated and constructed and fine-tuned to evoke and provoke the memories and emotions of people and moments in certain ways.

"Monuments are history made visible. They are shrines that celebrate the ideals, achievements and heroes that existed in one moment in time," architectural historian Judith Dupre writes in her 2007 book about them — a book she first pitched to her publisher on, of all dates, Sept. 10, 2001.

Yet while monuments stand, remembering itself evolves. How 9/11 is remembered depends on when 9/11 is remembered. Remembering it on Sept. 15, 2001, or on Sept. 11, 2004 is different from remembering it on Sept 11, 2011 — or, for that matter, different from what it will be next weekend.

What, then, does remembering come to mean on a 20th anniversary, or at any juncture when an event like 9/11 starts to recede into the past — starts to become history — even as its echoes are still shaking the foundations of everything?

"Our present influences how we remember the past — sometimes in ways that are known and sometimes in ways that we don't realize," says Jennifer Talarico, a psychology professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania who studies how people form personal memories of public events.

Evidence of that is obvious in the events of the past five weeks in Afghanistan, where a 20-year war waged in direct response to 9/11 ended pretty much where it began: with the repressive and violent Taliban in charge once more.

"If we were still in Afghanistan and things were stable, we would be remembering 9/11 in probably a very different way than how we will remember it this year," says Richard Cooper, a vice president at the nonprofit Space Foundation who worked for the Department of Homeland Security for several years after the attacks and has watched many remembrances over the years.

"That heartbreak and pain we felt on the morning of Sept. 12, 2001, is resurrecting itself," Cooper says, "and that impacts how we remember it today."

Even within more static forms of memory, such as the Flight 93 National Memorial, the question of how remembering changes and evolves hangs over so much.

In the visitors' center, visceral, painful artifacts of the moment still bring back the past with astonishing efficiency; twisted, scarred cutlery from in-flight meals is a particularly breathtaking sight. But the variety of remembering that is presented yards away at the quiet overlook and its thoughtful memorial feels more permanent, more eternal — and now, 20 years on, more befitting of something that happened a

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generation ago.

Paul Murdoch of Los Angeles, the lead architect on the memorial, says it was carefully calibrated to resonate across multiple stages of memory about the event and its implications.

"You can imagine a memorial approach that sort of freezes anger in time, or freezes fear. And that can be a very expressionistic piece of art. But I feel like for something to endure over a long period of time, I think it has to operate a different way," says Murdoch, who co-designed the memorial with his wife, Milena.

"Now we have a generation of people who weren't even alive on 9/11," Murdoch says. "So how do you talk to people of this new generation — or of future generations?"

That question is particularly potent on this 20th anniversary. Society tends to mark generations in two-decade packages, so there's an entire one that has been born and come of age since the attacks. That hardly means they haven't been paying attention, though; they "remember" too, even if they weren't around.

Krystine Batcho, a psychology professor at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, studies how nostalgia works. She found something interesting a couple years ago when she was researching how young people encountered stories that resonated with them — both personally and through the news.

Even those who lacked living memories of 9/11, Batcho says, responded with stories about the event. It was remembering as shared experience.

And no wonder. So many first encounters with 9/11 on the day it happened were, in the tradition of an information age, both separate and communal. People in different parts of the country and world, under vastly different circumstances, watched the same live camera angles on the same few feeds and saw the same, now-indelible views of the destruction in the same way. They experienced it apart, but together.

That formed a communal memory of sorts, even if sometimes people who saw the same things didn't remember them the same way — a specific camera angle or vantage point, a key figure's comments, the exact sequence of events. Remembering can be like that, experts like Talarico say, particularly with intense flashbulb memories like 9/11 that carve deep grooves but aren't necessarily accurate in the details.

"We reconstruct the event through our own lens, and part of that lens is very social," Batcho says. "You would think that the memories would be more cohesive and homogeneous. It turns out that it's much more complicated than that."

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May 31, 2002, less than a year afterward. Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani tells high school students in Shanksville at their commencement: "A hundred years from now, people are going to come and want to see it. And they are going to want to know what happened."

Sept. 11, 2016, the 15th anniversary. President Barack Obama says: "Fifteen years may seem like a long time. But for the families who lost a piece of their heart that day, I imagine it can seem like just yesterday."

That fundamental tension — it feels like yesterday, yes, but it is also becoming part of history for the long haul — is what confronts us in the coming days as many revisit and consider 9/11 and commit their own acts of remembering.

For those who were not at the nucleus of 9/11's horror and its pain but experienced it as part of the culture in which they live, it can somehow manage to feel like both yesterday and a long time ago all at once. And as with so many acts of remembering, it is still being debated and contested — and will be for a long time to come.

"Sober ceremonies should not mislead us into thinking the public remembrance of this horrific event is a settled matter," 9/11 historian John Bodnar wrote in a Washington Post opinion piece in May.

At a hinge point like a major anniversary, particularly with something as seismic as 9/11, it's easy to fall back on an aphorism like this one from William Faulkner: "The past is never dead. It's not even past." But the saying has endured for a reason.

Memory becomes history. And history — shared history — is held onto tightly, sometimes rabidly. It's why so many people grasp tightly to comforting, nostalgic historical narratives — even when they're shown to have been as destructive as they were productive.

The act of remembering something like 9/11 involves exactly that delicate balance. When memory does become history, it can become more remote, like a Revolutionary War memorial for people whose passions

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and sacrifices have been sanded down by time. With distance, it can calcify.

That's not going to happen with 9/11 for a long time, of course. Its politics are still roiling. The arguments that it produced — and the ways they sent society hurtling in a different direction — are just as intense as in those early days.

And when a nation pauses to remember the morning 20 years ago when it was attacked, it is not only looking over its shoulder. It is also looking around and wondering: What does this mean to us now?

"What is important in making a memorial, in what you remember and in how you remember it?" J. William Thompson wondered in his elegant 2017 book, "From Memory to Memorial: Shanksville, America and Flight 93."

Any answers to that are, understandably, complex. But behind all the formal words and ways to commemorate a day that upended the world, something more fundamental lurks: a simple imperative to hold onto a sense of what changed things, and how.

On the cover of Thompson's book, a man stands looking at the Shanksville crash site, his right arm raised. In his left he holds a hand-painted sign etched with four words, one declarative sentence: "I did not forget."

Ted Anthony, director of new storytelling and newsroom innovation for The Associated Press, was AP's director of Asia-Pacific news from 2014 to 2018 and covered the aftermath of 9/11 in Afghanistan and Pakistan from 2001 to 2003. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/anthonyted>

## Do we need humans for that job? Automation booms after COVID

By MATT O'BRIEN and PAUL WISEMAN AP Business Writers

Ask for a roast beef sandwich at an Arby's drive-thru east of Los Angeles and you may be talking to Tori — an artificially intelligent voice assistant that will take your order and send it to the line cooks.

"It doesn't call sick," says Amir Siddiqi, whose family installed the AI voice at its Arby's franchise this year in Ontario, California. "It doesn't get corona. And the reliability of it is great."

The pandemic didn't just threaten Americans' health when it slammed the U.S. in 2020 -- it may also have posed a long-term threat to many of their jobs. Faced with worker shortages and higher labor costs, companies are starting to automate service sector jobs that economists once considered safe, assuming that machines couldn't easily provide the human contact they believed customers would demand.

Past experience suggests that such automation waves eventually create more jobs than they destroy, but that they also disproportionately wipe out less skilled jobs that many low-income workers depend on. Resulting growing pains for the U.S. economy could be severe.

If not for the pandemic, Siddiqi probably wouldn't have bothered investing in new technology that could alienate existing employees and some customers. But it's gone smoothly, he says: "Basically, there's less people needed but those folks are now working in the kitchen and other areas."

Ideally, automation can redeploy workers into better and more interesting work, so long as they can get the appropriate technical training, says Johannes Moenius, an economist at the University of Redlands. But although that's happening now, it's not moving quickly enough, he says.

Worse, an entire class of service jobs created when manufacturing began to deploy more automation may now be at risk. "The robots escaped the manufacturing sector and went into the much larger service sector," he says. "I regarded contact jobs as safe. I was completely taken by surprise."

Improvements in robot technology allow machines to do many tasks that previously required people -- tossing pizza dough, transporting hospital linens, inspecting gauges, sorting goods. The pandemic accelerated their adoption. Robots, after all, can't get sick or spread disease. Nor do they request time off to handle unexpected childcare emergencies.

Economists at the International Monetary Fund found that past pandemics had encouraged firms to invest in machines in ways that could boost productivity -- but also kill low-skill jobs. "Our results suggest that the concerns about the rise of the robots amid the COVID-19 pandemic seem justified," they wrote in a January paper.

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The consequences could fall most heavily on the less-educated women who disproportionately occupy the low- and mid-wage jobs most exposed to automation -- and to viral infections. Those jobs include salesclerks, administrative assistants, cashiers and aides in hospitals and those who take care of the sick and elderly.

Employers seem eager to bring on the machines. A survey last year by the nonprofit World Economic Forum found that 43% of companies planned to reduce their workforce as a result of new technology. Since the second quarter of 2020, business investment in equipment has grown 26%, more than twice as fast as the overall economy.

The fastest growth is expected in the roving machines that clean the floors of supermarkets, hospitals and warehouses, according to the International Federation of Robotics, a trade group. The same group also expects an uptick in sales of robots that provide shoppers with information or deliver room service orders in hotels.

Restaurants have been among the most visible robot adopters. In late August, for instance, the salad chain Sweetgreen announced it was buying kitchen robotics startup Spyce, which makes a machine that cooks up vegetables and grains and spouts them into bowls.

It's not just robots, either -- software and AI-powered services are on the rise as well. Starbucks has been automating the behind-the-scenes work of keeping track of a store's inventory. More stores have moved to self-checkout.

Scott Lawton, CEO of the Arlington, Virginia-based restaurant chain Bartaco, was having trouble last fall getting servers to return to his restaurants when they reopened during the pandemic.

So he decided to do without them. With the help of a software firm, his company developed an online ordering and payment system customers could use over their phones. Diners now simply scan a barcode at the center of each table to access a menu and order their food without waiting for a server. Workers bring food and drinks to their tables. And when they're done eating, customers pay over their phones and leave.

The innovation has shaved the number of staff, but workers aren't necessarily worse off. Each Bartaco location — there are 21 — now has up to eight assistant managers, roughly double the pre-pandemic total. Many are former servers, and they roam among the tables to make sure everyone has what they need. They are paid annual salaries starting at \$55,000 rather than hourly wages.

Tips are now shared among all the other employees, including dishwashers, who now typically earn \$20 an hour or more, far higher than their pre-pandemic pay. "We don't have the labor shortages that you're reading about on the news," Lawton says.

The uptick in automation has not stalled a stunning rebound in the U.S. jobs market -- at least so far.

The U.S. economy lost a staggering 22.4 million jobs in March and April 2020, when the pandemic gale hit the U.S. Hiring has since bounced back briskly: Employers have brought back 17 million jobs since April 2020. In June, they posted a record 10.1 million job openings and are complaining that they can't find enough workers.

Behind the hiring boom is a surge in spending by consumers, many of whom got through the crisis in unexpectedly good shape financially -- thanks to both federal relief checks and, in many cases, savings accumulated by working from home and skipping the daily commute.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, expects employers are likely to be scrambling for workers for a long time.

For one thing, many Americans are taking their time returning to work -- some because they're still worried about COVID-19 health risks and childcare problems, others because of generous federal unemployment benefits, set to expire nationwide Sept. 6.

In addition, large numbers of Baby Boom workers are retiring. "The labor market is going to be very, very tight for the foreseeable future," Zandi says.

For now, the short-term benefits of the economic snapback are overwhelming any job losses from automation, whose effects tend to show up gradually over a period of years. That may not last. Last year,

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researchers at the University of Zurich and University of British Columbia found that the so-called jobless recoveries of the past 35 years, in which economic output rebounded from recessions faster than employment, could be explained by the loss of jobs vulnerable to automation.

Despite strong hiring since the middle of last year, the U.S. economy is still 5.3 million jobs short of what it had in February 2020. And Lydia Boussour, lead U.S. economist at Oxford Economics, calculated last month that 40% of the missing jobs are vulnerable to automation, especially those in food preparation, retail sales and manufacturing.

Some economists worry that automation pushes workers into lower-paid positions. Daron Acemoglu, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Pascual Restrepo of Boston University estimated in June that up to 70% of the stagnation in U.S. wages between 1980 and 2016 could be explained by machines replacing humans doing routine tasks.

"Many of the jobs that get automated were at the middle of the skill distribution," Acemoglu says. "They don't exist anymore, and the workers that used to perform them are now doing lower-skill jobs."

AP Economics Writer Christopher Rugaber contributed to this story.

## Outside of New Orleans, an even longer road to Ida recovery

By MATT SEDENSKY, CHEVEL JOHNSON and AARON MORRISON Associated Press

HOUMA, La. (AP) — The coronavirus pandemic claimed Kendall Duthu's job as a cook at a jambalaya restaurant. Then Hurricane Ida claimed his house.

The 26-year-old resident of Dulac, Louisiana, is now living out of his car with his girlfriend after Ida roared ashore a week ago Sunday, splintering homes in its path. Now he doesn't know what's next.

On Saturday, Duthu collected a container of red beans and rice from volunteers in nearby Houma who handed out ice, water and meals to shell-shocked storm survivors. He stopped to eat inside his Infiniti, its windshield shattered.

"Next stop, I don't really ..." he said, trailing off. "We've just been living day by day."

Both Dulac and Houma are in Terrebonne Parish, among the hardest-hit areas of Louisiana battered to an unprecedented degree by Hurricane Ida. Though Louisiana's largest electric utility, Entergy, estimates most residents in New Orleans will have power by Wednesday, recovery efforts outside of the city could be a much longer slog.

Meanwhile, residents continue to face food, water and gas shortages while battling heat and humidity.

Some parishes outside New Orleans were battered for hours by winds of 100 mph (160 kph) or more.

Fully restoring electricity to some of these southeastern parishes could take until the end of the month, according to Entergy President and CEO Phillip May.

Ida damaged or destroyed more than 22,000 power poles, more than hurricanes Katrina, Zeta and Delta combined, an impact May called "staggering." More than 5,200 transformers failed and nearly 26,000 spans of wire — the stretch of transmission wires between poles — were down.

By Saturday morning, power was restored to about 282,000 customers from the peak of 902,000 who lost power after Ida.

Outside of Dulac, 45-year-old shrimper Jay Breaux stood in front of his home, snapped open by the storm. Breaux could see a bed exposed through a cratered wall and a lawn chair dangling from the debris. But he smiled widely, saying his family wasn't doing as badly as others.

"It don't pay to cry about it," he said of Ida, the latest storm to hit his small town along the bayou. "I got 10 or 12 of them things under my belt. But this one here is the worst."

At least 16 deaths were blamed on the storm in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. In the Northeast, Ida's remnants dumped record-breaking rain and killed at least 50 people from Virginia to Connecticut.

Louisiana's 12 storm-related deaths included five nursing home residents evacuated ahead of the hurricane along with hundreds of other seniors to a warehouse in Louisiana, where health officials said conditions became unsafe.

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On Saturday evening, State Health Officer Dr. Joseph Kanter ordered the immediate closure of the seven nursing facilities that sent residents to the Tangipahoa Parish warehouse facility.

"The lack of regard for these vulnerable residents' wellbeing is an affront to human dignity. We have lost trust in these nursing homes to provide adequate care for their residents," Kanter said.

As recovery efforts continued, state officials were monitoring a system of disturbed weather in Mexico's Bay of Campeche, which appeared set to move into the central Gulf of Mexico closer to Louisiana.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said Saturday the state is planning an exercise to assess its emergency response if needed. Predictions so far don't show the system strengthening into a hurricane, but he said "even if it's a tropical storm, we're in no state to receive that much rainfall at this time."

"We can't take the playbook we normally use because the people and assets are no longer where they would have been," Edwards said. "How do you staff up shelters you need for the new storm and continue to test for COVID? My head's getting painful just thinking about it. ... We will be as ready as we can be, but I'm praying we don't have to deal with that."

The lower Mississippi River reopened to all vessel traffic in New Orleans and key ports throughout southeastern Louisiana after power lines from a downed transmission tower were removed, the U.S. Coast Guard said.

New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell said the city would offer transportation starting Saturday to any resident looking to leave the city and get to a public shelter.

By the end of Saturday, city agencies conducting wellness checks had evacuated hundreds of people out of eight senior living complexes where officials deemed conditions unfit for living. The coroner's office is investigating four post-storm deaths that occurred at three of those facilities.

In suburban New Orleans, Jefferson Parish Sheriff Joseph Lopinto urged people "to calm down" as he announced Saturday that a man wanted in the shooting death a day earlier of another man during a dispute in a line at a gas station was in custody.

Meanwhile Saturday, Coast Guard cleanup crews were responding to a sizable oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico following the storm. The spill, which is ongoing, appears to be coming from an underwater source at an offshore drilling lease about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) south of Port Fourchon, Louisiana.

Johnson and Morrison reported from New Orleans.

## Women say they met porn actor Jeremy for fun; rape came next

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Adult film actor Ron Jeremy leveraged the novelty of his celebrity to meet and often isolate women who he raped and sexually assaulted, using the same tactics for years, according to grand jury testimony from 21 women that was unsealed Saturday.

"Wouldn't it be funny if we got a picture and an autograph from him?" one woman, identified only as Jane Doe 8, said she remembered telling her friend when they saw Jeremy in 2013 at a West Hollywood bar and grill. He would sexually assault her minutes later, testified the woman, one of several who said their attacks came in the same small bathroom.

"I was like, wow, you know, this is Ron Jeremy, I mean, I was kind of impressed. I'm like he's — I don't want to say 'celebrity,' but you know, he kind of was," said another woman, Jane Doe 7, when Jeremy came to the door of the Hollywood hotel room she was sharing with friends, where the porn actor would rape her soon after, according to her testimony.

Jeremy, 68, whose legal name is Ronald Jeremy Hyatt, pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of sexual assault, including 12 counts of rape, when the Los Angeles County grand jury returned an indictment against him on Aug. 25. He has been in jail since his arrest in June 2020. His attorney, Stuart Goldfarb, has said he is "innocent of all the charges" and they would prove it. An email seeking further comment from Goldfarb on Saturday was not immediately returned.

Nicknamed "The Hedgehog," Jeremy has been among the best-known and most prolific performers in

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the porn industry for decades, and became a recognizable pop cultural novelty through reality shows, public appearances and music videos. He has long been a magnet for seekers of autographs and selfies, which is how most of the women and girls aged 15 to 51 he is accused of assaulting first met him.

Some didn't even recognize him initially, but they came into his orbit because of the air of fame around him. A woman, now 33, who Jeremy is charged with sexually assaulting when she was 15 in 2004 said she approached him at a rave he was hosting in Santa Clarita, California.

"I didn't know who he was, but I just — everyone told me he was famous so I was excited to meet a celebrity," said the woman, now 33, known as Jane Doe 5.

After they met, he invited her backstage, where he asked her if she wanted to see "something cool," then lifted her in the air, put his hand under her skirt and molested her, she said.

Many women described Jeremy using the same methods in the same places.

He was a popular regular at the Rainbow Bar and Grill on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, where he had permission to use the employee bathroom.

He would lure women there by offering to show them the kitchen where the restaurant made its famous pizzas, or by telling them he knew a bathroom they could use when the public restrooms were closed after last call.

He would follow them into the small space, lock the door behind them, use his considerable size to block them from leaving, then rape them or engage in other sexual assault, several women testified.

Jane Doe 8 said before her assault she told Jeremy they were staying at the Loew's Hollywood Hotel, but did not tell him the room number.

He appeared at the door the next day.

"I have connections all over this town," she remembered him saying when she asked how she found them. She had not told her friend, Jane Doe 7, about the assault, and failed in her attempts to get her out of the room, where Jeremy would rape her, according to their testimony.

Several women said Jeremy asked them to write a note about their experience on a napkin of scrap of paper in what prosecutors called an attempt to gain evidence of consent after the fact. The women, under duress and looking to get away, often complied.

Jeremy also gave some victims cash after the attacks, for what prosecutors said was similar reasons.

"He just out of nowhere just tossed money at me," said a woman who got a \$100 bill from Jeremy after she said he raped her in 2019 the Rainbow Bar and Grill bathroom.

The woman's boyfriend and brother had warned her to stay away from Jeremy earlier in the evening when she asked who he was, but she took a picture with him anyway when she saw several others doing it.

She testified that she got into the car with them holding the cash and said, "This came from that guy you guys told me to stay away from. He just raped me in the bathroom."

The woman went to the police about an hour later, becoming one of the few who reported their assaults immediately. Some said Jeremy's status as a porn performer kept them from going to authorities for years.

"He's a celebrity and what he's known for is having sex with people on camera for money," said Jane Doe 7, who like many of the victims came forward years later only after Jeremy was arrested last year. "I thought there is no way anyone is going to believe me, and I just wanted to get out of there and forget all about it."

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Associated Press Writer Kathleen Foody contributed to this story from Chicago.

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Follow AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/andyjamesdalton>

## El Salvador court drops ban on presidential reelection

By MARCOS ALEMAN Associated Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — El Salvador's top court and its election authority have tossed aside what seemed to be a constitutional ban on consecutive presidential reelection, setting the stage for Presi-

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dent Nayib Bukele to potentially seek a second term in 2024.

The Supreme Court's Constitutional Chamber on Friday told the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to permit a second term, and the electoral authority announced Saturday it would accept what it called a ruling that cannot be appealed.

The rulings — by a court recently overhauled by Bukele's party — alarmed opposition parties and citizen activist groups who have long accused the popular leader of authoritarian tendencies and who said the ruling was clearly unconstitutional.

Bukele has not so far announced plans to seek reelection, but critics assume he will.

"The election of 2024 will be a great farce," said attorney Eduardo Escobar of the nongovernmental group Citizen Action.

Until now, courts have interpreted El Salvador's constitution to forbid presidents from seeking reelection for 10 years — equivalent to two five-year terms of the National Assembly — after their initial term.

The constitution bars the candidacy of those who have held the presidency for more than six months "during the period immediately before or during the last six months before the beginning of the presidential term."

The populist president elected in 2019 has maintained high popularity with his vows to stamp out corruption that was rampant among the country's traditional parties. His New Ideas party won a congressional majority this year and immediately after taking its seats in the National Assembly in May, it replaced the five members of the Constitutional Chamber and the independent attorney general who had balked at several of Bukele's earlier actions.

Attorney Salvador Salvador Enrique Anaya, whose case challenging efforts to promote reelection led to the court action, argued that the decision "has no legal value: It is not signed by the justices."

"The state ceased to be at the service of the people and passed to be at the service of one person," tweeted Anabel Belloso, a congress member for the opposition Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

The conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance said the effort to maintain and concentrate power "is the precursor to a dictatorship. Power tends to corrupt. Absolute power corrupts absolutely."

The chargé d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador, Jean Manes, said at a news conference that the U.S. government condemns the decision.

Noting the legislature earlier replaced the magistrates on the Constitutional Chamber with judges loyal to the president, Manes said the court's ruling "demonstrates a clear strategy to undermine judicial independence and remove a key counterweight to the executive branch."

"A fundamental principle of democracy is the three branches of government, so a weakening of the independence of the judiciary is a sign of a democracy in decline in El Salvador," she said.

## Cleanup boats on scene of large Gulf oil spill following Ida

By MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard said Saturday that cleanup crews are responding to a sizable oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico following Hurricane Ida.

The spill, which is ongoing, appears to be coming from a source underwater at an offshore drilling lease about two miles (three kilometers) south of Port Fourchon, Louisiana. The reported location is near the site of a miles-long brown and black oil slick visible in aerial photos first published Wednesday by The Associated Press.

So far, the growing spill appears to have remained out to sea and has not impacted the Louisiana shoreline. There is not yet any estimate for how much oil was in the water, but recent satellite images reviewed by AP on Saturday appeared to show the slick drifting more than a dozen miles (more than 19 kilometers) eastward along the Gulf coast.

Coast Guard spokesman Lt. John Edwards said response teams are monitoring reports and satellite imagery to determine the scope of the discharge. He said the source of the pollution is located in Bay Marchand, Block 4, and is believed to be crude oil from an undersea pipeline owned by Talos Energy.



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Brian L. Grove, spokesman for the Houston-based energy company, said it had hired Clean Gulf Associates to respond to the spill even though the company believes it is not responsible for the oil in the water.

Clean Gulf Associates, a nonprofit oil-spill response cooperative that works with the energy exploration and production industry, responded to the scene Wednesday. Its workers have placed a containment boom in the area to mitigate further spread of the oil. The company's vessels are also running skimmers that can remove oil from the water, though the Coast Guard said only about 42 gallons (about 160 liters) had been removed so far.

Talos is investigating the cause of the leak, but a statement provided by Grove said that field observations indicate the company's assets are not the source. Talos previously leased Bay Marchand, Block 5, but ceased production there in 2017, plugged its wells and removed all pipeline infrastructure by 2019, according to the company.

Talos said two 95-foot (29-meter) response vessels had been dispatched to the scene to conduct oil recovery operations. A lift boat equipped to conduct dive operations has also been mobilized and is expected to arrive Saturday. The Coast Guard said the company had indicated divers would descend to the bottom on Sunday to determine the source of the leak.

"Talos will continue to work closely with the U.S. Coast Guard and other state and federal agencies to identify the source of the release and coordinate a successful response," the company's statement said. "The company's top priorities are the safety of all personnel and the protection of the public and environment."

The Bay Marchand spill is one of dozens of reported environmental hazards state and federal regulators are responding to in Louisiana and the Gulf following the Category 4 hurricane that made landfall at Port Fourchon on Sunday. The region is a major production center of the U.S. petrochemical industry.

The AP also first reported Wednesday on images from a National Atmospheric and Oceanic Survey that showed extensive flooding and what appeared to be petroleum in the water at the sprawling Phillips 66 Alliance Refinery located along the Mississippi River south of New Orleans.

After AP published the photos, the Environmental Protection Agency tasked a specially outfitted survey aircraft to fly over that refinery on Thursday, as well as other industrial sites in area hardest hit by the hurricane's 150-mph (240-kph) winds and storm surge.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality said a state assessment team sent to the Alliance Refinery observed a spill of heavy oil being addressed with booms and absorbent pads. A levee meant to protect the plant had breached, allowing floodwaters to flow in during the storm and then back out as the surge receded.

State environmental officials said there was no estimate yet available for how much oil might have spilled from the refinery.

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Contact AP's global investigative team at [Investigative@ap.org](mailto:Investigative@ap.org).

## Women say they met porn actor Jeremy for fun; rape came next

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

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came to the door of the Hollywood hotel room she was sharing with friends, where the porn actor would rape her soon after, according to her testimony.

Jeremy, 68, whose legal name is Ronald Jeremy Hyatt, pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of sexual assault, including 12 counts of rape, when the Los Angeles County grand jury returned an indictment against him on Aug. 25. He has been in jail since his arrest in June 2020. His attorney, Stuart Goldfarb, has said he is "innocent of all the charges" and they would prove it. An email seeking further comment from Goldfarb on Saturday was not immediately returned.

Nicknamed "The Hedgehog," Jeremy has been among the best-known and most prolific performers in the porn industry for decades, and became a recognizable pop cultural novelty through reality shows, public appearances and music videos. He has long been a magnet for seekers of autographs and selfies, which is how most of the women and girls aged 15 to 51 he is accused of assaulting first met him.

Some didn't even recognize him initially, but they came into his orbit because of the air of fame around him. A woman, now 33, who Jeremy is charged with sexually assaulting when she was 15 in 2004 said she approached him at a rave he was hosting in Santa Clarita, California.

"I didn't know who he was, but I just — everyone told me he was famous so I was excited to meet a celebrity," said the woman, now 33, known as Jane Doe 5.

After they met, he invited her backstage, where he asked her if she wanted to see "something cool," then lifted her in the air, put his hand under her skirt and molested her, she said.

Many women described Jeremy using the same methods in the same places.

He was a popular regular at the Rainbow Bar and Grill on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, where he had permission to use the employee bathroom.

He would lure women there by offering to show them the kitchen where the restaurant made its famous pizzas, or by telling them he knew a bathroom they could use when the public restrooms were closed after last call.

He would follow them into the small space, lock the door behind them, use his considerable size to block them from leaving, then rape them or engage in other sexual assault, several women testified.

Jane Doe 8 said before her assault she told Jeremy they were staying at the Loew's Hollywood Hotel, but did not tell him the room number.

He appeared at the door the next day.

"I have connections all over this town," she remembered him saying when she asked how she found them. She had not told her friend, Jane Doe 7, about the assault, and failed in her attempts to get her out of the room, where Jeremy would rape her, according to their testimony.

Several women said Jeremy asked them to write a note about their experience on a napkin of scrap of paper in what prosecutors called an attempt to gain evidence of consent after the fact. The women, under duress and looking to get away, often complied.

Jeremy also gave some victims cash after the attacks, for what prosecutors said was similar reasons.

"He just out of nowhere just tossed money at me," said a woman who got a \$100 bill from Jeremy after she said he raped her in 2019 the Rainbow Bar and Grill bathroom.

The woman's boyfriend and brother had warned her to stay away from Jeremy earlier in the evening when she asked who he was, but she took a picture with him anyway when she saw several others doing it.

She testified that she got into the car with them holding the cash and said, "This came from that guy you guys told me to stay away from. He just raped me in the bathroom."

The woman went to the police about an hour later, becoming one of the few who reported their assaults immediately. Some said Jeremy's status as a porn performer kept them from going to authorities for years.

"He's a celebrity and what he's known for is having sex with people on camera for money," said Jane Doe 7, who like many of the victims came forward years later only after Jeremy was arrested last year. "I thought there is no way anyone is going to believe me, and I just wanted to get out of there and forget all about it."

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Associated Press Writer Kathleen Foody contributed to this story from Chicago.

Follow AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/andyjamesdalton>

## Lake Tahoe evacuees hope to return home as wildfire slows

By DAISY NGUYEN Associated Press

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. (AP) — Firefighters are making progress on a California wildfire threatening South Lake Tahoe, officials said Saturday, lifting hopes for tens of thousands of residents who are waiting this weekend to return to the resort town.

Lighter winds and higher humidity continue to reduce the spread of flames, and fire crews were quick to take advantage by doubling down on burning and cutting fire lines around the Caldor Fire.

Bulldozers with giant blades, crews armed with shovels and a fleet of aircraft dropping hundreds of thousands of gallons of water and fire retardant helped keep the fire's advance to a couple of thousand acres — a fraction of its explosive spread last month and the smallest increase in two weeks.

"The incident continues to look better and better every day," Tim Burton, an operations chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention, told firefighters at a Saturday briefing. "A large part of that is due to your hard work as well as the weather cooperating in the last week or so."

The northeast section of the immense Sierra Nevada blaze was still within a few miles of South Lake Tahoe and the Nevada state line. But fire officials said it hadn't made any significant advances in several days and wasn't challenging containment lines in long sections of its perimeter.

With more than one third of the 334-square-mile (866-square-kilometer) blaze surrounded, authorities allowed more people back into their homes on the western and northern sides of the fires Friday afternoon.

Mandatory evacuation orders on the Nevada side of the state line were lifted, but some areas remained on a warning status. Douglas County authorities urged residents to stay alert, saying the fire still has the potential to threaten homes.

Meanwhile, there was no timeline for allowing the return of 22,000 South Lake Tahoe residents. Authorities were taking the decision on whether to lift South Lake Tahoe's evacuation day by day.

"It's all based on fire behavior," said Jake Cagle, a fire operations section chief. "For now, things are looking good ... we're getting close."

The resort area can easily accommodate 100,000 people on a busy weekend but was eerily empty — except for the occasional, wandering bear — just before the holiday weekend.

The wildfire dealt a major blow to an economy that heavily depends on tourism and was starting to rebound this summer from pandemic shutdowns.

Fire crews still had a lot of work to do in the grasslands, timber stands and granite outcroppings. And despite the overall better weather, winds could still be "squirrely" and locally erratic as they hit the region's ridges and deep canyons.

The fire — which began Aug. 14, was named after the road where it started and raged through densely forested, craggy areas — has destroyed nearly 900 homes, businesses and other buildings. It was still considered a threat to more than 30,000 more structures.

Wildfires this year have burned at least 1,500 homes and decimated several mountain hamlets. The Dixie Fire, burning about 65 miles (105 kilometers) north of the Caldor Fire, is the second-largest wildfire in state history at about 1,385 square miles (3,585 square kilometers) and is 55% contained.

California has experienced increasingly larger and deadlier wildfires in recent years as climate change has made the West much warmer and drier over the past 30 years. Scientists have said weather will continue to be more extreme and wildfires more frequent, destructive and unpredictable. No deaths have been reported so far this fire season.

Nguyen reported from San Francisco.

## **Companies: \$26B settlement of opioid lawsuits to move ahead**

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

Four companies in the drug industry said Saturday that enough states had agreed to a settlement of lawsuits over the opioid crisis for them to move ahead with the \$26 billion deal.

An announcement from the three largest U.S. drug distribution companies and a confirmation from drugmaker Johnson & Johnson, which had previously announced that it would move ahead, came Saturday. That was the deadline for the companies to decide whether there was enough buy-in to continue the settlement plan.

The distribution companies — AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson — said that 42 states had agreed to join. Johnson & Johnson did not immediately say how many states agreed to its part of the settlement.

Together, the settlements are likely to represent the biggest piece of a string of settlements between companies in the drug industry and state and local governments over the addiction and overdose epidemic in the U.S. Prescription opioids such as OxyContin and Vicodin and illicit ones such as heroin and illegally made fentanyl have been linked to more than 500,000 deaths in the U.S. since 2000.

Under the \$26 billion settlement, which was initially announced in June, states were given a month to decide whether to join. Then it would be up to the companies to decide whether it was enough to keep going.

The next step is trying to get local governments to sign on to the deal and agree not to continue their lawsuits. This phase is to last until Jan. 2. After that, the companies will again decide whether enough have joined to implement the deal.

Saturday's milestone came days after a judge gave initial approval to a settlement worked out in bankruptcy court between OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma and some 3,000 plaintiffs. That deal could be worth \$10 billion over time.

In all the cases, governments have agreed to put most of their shares toward drug treatment and education programs and other measures to fight the epidemic.

This year, there have been three trials on governments' claims over opioids, though none have reached a verdict. More similar trials are queued up for this year and next.

The day of the week has been corrected to Saturday in the opening paragraph.

## **Miami Beach says law-breaking partiers no longer tolerated**

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — South Beach's sizzling party scene is about to undergo a massive boost in police presence and tougher crackdowns on raucous crowds and crime, weeks after a tourist eating dinner with his family was fatally shot at a Miami Beach restaurant, authorities say.

"The many years of troubling incidents in this district can no longer be tolerated," City Manager Alina Hudak said in a memo Friday disclosing plans to "create the highest level of regular police presence this area has ever seen."

Miami Beach Mayor Dan Gelber ordered police, along with fire rescue, parking, sanitation and other departments to devise a unified strategy to deal with the crowds. The police department reassigned an average of 40 officers to patrol South Beach streets, to increase "visibility" not just on nights and weekends, but throughout the day, the memo stated.

Ten officers from the county are being added every weekend to South Beach duty for the rest of the year, Gelber said in a video message Friday.

The beach-front party scene has been plagued with increasingly out-of-control partiers during holiday weekends. They city enacted a strict 8 p.m. curfew in March after unruly spring break crowds gathered in the streets by the thousands, erupting into fights, destroying restaurant property and refusing to wear

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masks. Over 1,000 were arrested and many were from out of town, police said.

"It is no longer sufficient to treat what has historically been defined as "high impact periods" as anomalies when every weekend brings significant crowds and challenges," Hudak said.

Additional code officers and park rangers will be assigned to enforce ordinance violations to create a "visible and constant deterrent" to overcrowding and other problems. Hudak stressed in the memo that the parties created a "year-round threat to public safety from visitors who have demonstrated a blatant disregard for human life, public property and the well-being of our many law-abiding residents and guests."

Gelber said more than half of the nearly 1,600 arrests in 2021 came from the entertainment district, where speeding, fights and gun violence have become commonplace. The city seized more than 500 guns this year and now has 870 surveillance cameras operational.

"Every few days, I call a police officer who has been injured in the line of duty," the mayor said. "Few cities face these challenges or ask as much of police."

The crackdown comes less than two weeks after a fatal tourist attack, when police said a gunman shot a 21-year-old father eating dinner with his family as the man protected his 1-year-old son.

Twenty-two year-old Tamarius Davis told investigators he shot Dustin Wakefield last month because he "was high on mushrooms, which made him feel empowered," according to an arrest report.

Since then, terrified residents have urged the mayor to take action. The mayor noted that Wakefield's killing happened at 6:30 p.m. on a Tuesday, but he said the world didn't hear about a stabbing earlier this week or the frequent early morning shootings.

"We cannot, we cannot accept this as our normal," Gelber said.

He warned that the new stepped-up police presence was not sustainable, and said the party district needs to be rezoned with fewer bars and clubs and more residential and office building.

Gelber also wants an earlier curfew on alcohol sales.

"What we have called an entertainment district has become an incredible magnet for crime and disorder and whatever it provides in revenue is just not worth the heartache," the mayor said.

## **Willard Scott, weatherman on NBC's 'Today' show, dies at 87**

NEW YORK (AP) — Willard Scott, the beloved weatherman who charmed viewers of NBC's "Today" show with his self-deprecating humor and cheerful personality, has died. He was 87.

His successor on the morning news show, Al Roker, announced that Scott died peacefully Saturday morning surrounded by family. An NBC Universal spokeswoman confirmed the news. No further details were released.

"He was truly my second dad and am where I am today because of his generous spirit," Roker wrote on Instagram. "Willard was a man of his times, the ultimate broadcaster. There will never be anyone quite like him."

"He played such an outsized role in my life and was as warm and loving and generous off-camera as he was on," Katie Couric tweeted.

Scott began his 65-year career at NBC as an entry-level page at an affiliate station in Washington, D.C., and rose to become the weather forecaster on the network's flagship morning show for more than three decades. His trademark was giving on-air birthday greetings to viewers who turned 100 years old by putting their faces on Smucker's jelly jars and delivering weather updates in zany costumes.

According to NBC, he once took up a viewer's dare to appear in drag to win a \$1,000 donation to the USO, the charity for military families, by dressing up as the Brazilian singer Carmen Miranda. The stunt wasn't new for the genial Scott: he played Bozo the Clown when he hosted a children's TV show in the 1960s and Ronald McDonald in commercials in the Washington area.

He often dressed as Santa Claus at the National Tree Lighting ceremony throughout the 1980s and co-anchored NBC's coverage of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade between 1987 to 1997. In one memorable moment on live television, First Lady Barbara Bush gave him a kiss during the 1989 inauguration parade of her husband, President George H.W. Bush.

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"(The president) said, 'I didn't know you knew Willard Scott.' I said, 'I don't know Willard Scott. I just love that face.'" the first lady recalled.

Scott handed the reins to Roker in 1996, occasionally filling in for him for the next decade before fully retiring in 2015.

He is survived by his wife, Paris Keena, whom he married in 2014, and two daughters with Mary Dwyer Scott, his wife of 43 years until she died in 2002.

## Over 24 hours in Kabul, brutality, trauma, moments of grace

By TAMEEM AKHGAR, MATTHEW LEE, LOLITA C. BALDOR, RAHIM FAIEZ and CALVIN WOODWARD  
Associated Press

Bone-tired like everyone else in Kabul, Taliban fighters spent the last moments of the 20-year Afghanistan war watching the night skies for the flares that would signal the United States was gone. From afar, U.S. generals watched video screens with the same anticipation.

Relief washed over the war's winners and the losers when the final U.S. plane took off.

For those in between and left behind — possibly a majority of the allied Afghans who sought U.S. clearance to escape — fear spread about what comes next, given the Taliban's history of ruthlessness and repression of women. And for thousands of U.S. officials and volunteers working around the world to place Afghan refugees, there is still no rest.

As witnessed by The Associated Press in Kabul and as told by people The AP interviewed from all sides, the war ended with episodes of brutality, enduring trauma, a massive if fraught humanitarian effort and moments of grace.

Enemies for two decades were thrust into a bizarre collaboration, joined in a common goal — the Taliban and the United States were united in wanting the United States out. They wanted, too, to avoid another deadly terrorist attack. Both sides had a stake in making the last 24 hours work.

In that stretch, the Americans worried that extremists would take aim at the hulking, helicopter-swallowing transport planes as they lifted off with the last U.S. troops and officials. Instead, in the green tint of night-vision goggles, the Americans looked down to goodbye waves from Taliban fighters on the tarmac.

The Taliban had worried that the Americans would rig the airport with mines. Instead the Americans left them with two useful fire trucks and functional front-end loaders along with a bleak panorama of self-sabotaged U.S. military machinery.

After several sleepless nights from the unrelenting thunder of U.S. evacuation flights overhead, Hemad Sherzad joined his fellow Taliban fighters in celebration from his post at the airport.

"We cried for almost an hour out of happiness," Sherzad told AP. "We yelled a lot — even our throat was in pain."

In the Pentagon operations center just outside Washington at the same time, you could hear a pin drop as the last C-17 took off. You could also hear sighs of relief from the top military officials in the room, even through COVID masks. President Joe Biden, determined to end the war and facing widespread criticism for his handling of the withdrawal, got the word from his national security adviser during a meeting with aides.

"I refused to send another generation of America's sons and daughters to fight a war that should have ended long ago," he said.

Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was among those watching at the Pentagon. "All of us are conflicted with feelings of pain and anger, sorrow and sadness," he said later, "combined with pride and resilience."

It was a harrowing 24 hours, capped Monday by the final C-17 takeoff at 11:59 p.m. in Kabul. Some who spoke to The AP about that period requested anonymity. U.S. officials who did so were not authorized to identify themselves.

### AIRPORT MADNESS

Before leaving Kabul, a U.S. consular officer with 25 years at the State Department was busy trying to

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process special visas for qualifying Afghans who made it through the Taliban, Afghan military and U.S. checkpoints into the airport. What she saw was wrenching.

"It was horrendous what the people had to go through to get in," she said. "Some people had spent three to five days waiting. On the inside we could hear the live ammunition being fired to keep the crowds back and the ones who made it in would tell us about Taliban soldiers with whips, sticks with nails in them, flash-bang grenades and tear gas pushing people back."

Even more upsetting, she said, were the children who got inside the airport separated from family, some plucked by chance out of teeming crowds by U.S. troops or others. As many as 30 children a day, many confused and all of them frightened, were showing up alone for evacuation flights during the 12 days she was on the ground.

A small unit at the airport for unaccompanied children set up by Norway was quickly overwhelmed, prompting UNICEF to take over. UNICEF is now running a center for unaccompanied child evacuees in Qatar.

More broadly, the U.S. sent thousands of employees to more than a half-dozen spots around Europe and the Middle East for screening and processing Afghan refugees before they moved on to the United States, or were rejected. U.S. embassies in Mexico, South Korea, India and elsewhere operated virtual call centers to handle the deluge of emails and calls on the evacuations.

Over the previous days in Kabul, many Afghans were turned back by the Taliban; others were allowed past them only to be stopped at a U.S. checkpoint. It was madness trying to sort out who satisfied both sides and could make it through the gauntlet.

Some Taliban soldiers appeared to be out for rough justice; others were disciplined, even collegial, over the last hours they spent face to face with U.S. troops at the airport. Some were caught off-guard by the U.S. decision to leave a day earlier than called for in the agreement between the combatants.

Sherzad said he and fellow Taliban soldiers gave cigarettes to the Americans at the airport and snuff to Afghans still in the uniform of their disintegrating army.

By then, he said, "everyone was calm. Just normal chitchat." Yet, "We were just counting minutes and moments for the time to rise our flag after full independence."

U.S. efforts to get at-risk Afghans and others onto the airport grounds were complicated by the viral spread of an electronic code that the U.S. sought to provide to those given priority for evacuation, said a senior State Department official who was on the ground in Kabul until Monday.

The official said the code, intended for local Afghan staff at the U.S. Embassy, had been shared so widely and quickly that almost all people seeking entry had a copy on their phone within an hour of it being distributed.

At the same time, the official said, some U.S. citizens showed up with large groups of Afghans, many not eligible for priority evacuation. And there were Afghan "entrepreneurs" who would falsely claim to be at an airport gate with groups of prominent at-risk Afghan officials.

"It involved some really painful trade-offs for everyone involved," the official said of the selections for evacuation. "Everyone who lived it is haunted by the choices we had to make."

The official said it appeared to him, at least anecdotally, that a majority of the Afghans who applied for special visas because of their past or present ties with the U.S. did not make it out.

Among the hurdles was the design of the airport itself. It had been constructed with restrictive access to prevent terrorist attacks and did not lend itself to allowing any large groups of people inside, let alone thousands frantically seeking entry. All of this unfolded under constant fear of another attack from an Islamic State offshoot that killed 169 Afghans and 13 U.S. service members in the Aug. 26 suicide bombing at the airport.

There were times, said another U.S. official familiar with the process, when Afghans made it on to evacuation planes, only to be pulled off before the flight when they were found to be on no-fly lists.

This official said that as far as is known, all but one U.S. Embassy employee made it out. That person had the required special visa but couldn't bear to leave her parents and other relatives behind. Despite pleading from Afghan and American colleagues to get on the evacuation bus to the airport, she opted to

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stay, the official said.

But a 24-year-old former U.S. contractor, Salim Yawer, who obtained visas and a gate pass with the help of his brother, a U.S. citizen, never got out with his wife and children aged 4 and 1 1/2. They tried four times to get to the airport before the Americans left.

"Each time we tried getting to the gate, I was afraid my small children would come under feet of other people," he said. He, too, did not expect the Americans to leave Monday, and he went back to the airport the next day.

"We didn't know that night that the Americans would leave us behind," Yawer said. "Monday, still, there were U.S. forces and planes and hopes among people. But Tuesday was a day of disappointment. ... Taliban were all over the area and there was no plane in the sky of Kabul anymore."

Yawer owned a Kabul construction company and traveled to various provinces doing work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, he said from his village back in northern Kapisa province, where he fled.

## COUNTDOWN

On the evening of Sunday, Aug. 29, in Kabul, surveillance showed people loading explosives into the trunk of a vehicle, U.S. officials said. The U.S. had been watching the car for hours, with reports of an imminent threat of another Islamic State militant attack. An American RQ-9 Reaper drone launched a Hellfire missile into the vehicle, in a compound between two buildings. U.S. officials said surveillance showed the initial missile explosion, followed by a large fireball, which they believed to be caused by the explosives in the vehicle. Neighbors disputed the U.S. claims of a vehicle packed with explosives.

On the ground, Najibullah Ismailzada said his brother-in-law Zemarai Ahmadi had just arrived home from his job working with a Korean charity. As he drove into the garage, his children came out to greet him, and that's when the missile struck.

"We lost 10 members of our family," Ismailzada said. Six ranged in age from 2 to 8. He said another relative, Naser Nejrabi, who was an ex-soldier in the Afghan army and interpreter for the U.S. military, also was killed, along with two teenagers.

Several hours after the drone strike, Biden was at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to witness the dignified transfer of the remains of the 13 U.S. troops killed in the previous week's suicide bombing and to meet the bereaved families. The card he keeps with him, listing the number of American service members who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan, had been updated with "plus 13," according to a person familiar with the president's exchange with the families.

In the final scramble at the Kabul airport that evening, evacuees were directed to specific gates as U.S. commanders communicated directly with the Taliban to get people out.

— About 8 a.m. Monday, explosions could be heard as five rockets were launched toward the airport. Three fell outside the airport, one landed inside but did no damage and one was intercepted by the U.S. anti-rocket system. No one was hurt.

Again, Islamic State militants, common foe of both the Taliban and the Americans, were suspected as the source.

— Through the morning, the last 1,500 or so Afghans to get out of the country before the U.S. withdrawal left on civilian transport. By 1:30 p.m., 1,200 U.S. troops remained on the ground and flights began to move them steadily out.

U.S. airpower — bombers, fighter jets, armed drones and the special operations helicopters known as Little Birds — provided air cover.

— Into the evening, U.S. troops finished several days' work destroying or removing military equipment. They disabled 27 Humvees and 73 aircraft, often draining transmission fluids and engine oil and running the engines until they seized. They used thermite grenades to destroy the system that had intercepted a rocket that morning. Equipment useful for civilian airport purposes, like the fire trucks, were left behind for the new authorities.

— At the end, fewer than 1,000 troops remained. Five C-17 planes came in darkness to take them out, with crews specially trained to fly into and out of airfields at night without air traffic control.



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From Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, commander of Air Mobility Command, watched on video screens as the aircraft filled and lined up for takeoff. An iconic image showed Maj. Gen. Christopher Donahue, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, carrying his M-4 rifle as he walked into a C-17 and into history as the last of the U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan.

Crisp orders and messages captured the last moments.

"Chock 5 100% accounted for," said one message, meaning all five aircraft were fully loaded and all people accounted for. "Clamshell," came an order, meaning retract the C-17 ramps one by one. Then, "flush the force," meaning get out.

— One minute to midnight, the last of the five took off.

Soon came the message "MAF Safe," meaning the Mobility Air Forces were gone from Kabul air space and in safe skies.

The American generals relaxed. From the ground in Kabul, Taliban fighter Mohammad Rassoul, known among other fighters as "Afghan Eagle," had been watching, too.

"Our eyes were on the sky desperately waiting," he said. The roar of planes that had kept him up for two nights had stopped. The Taliban flares at the airport streaked the sky.

"After 20 years of struggle we achieved our target," Rassoul said. He dared hope for a better life for his wife, two daughters and son.

"I want my children to grow up under peace," he said. "Away from drone strikes."

Akhgar and Faiez reported from Istanbul; Lee, Baldor and Woodward from Washington. Associated Press writers Kathy Gannon in Kabul, Robert Burns, Amer Madhani and Zeke Miller in Washington and Ellen Knickmeyer in Oklahoma City contributed.

## Biden to mark 20th anniversary of 9/11 at 3 memorial sites

By ZEKE MILLER and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will visit all three 9/11 memorial sites to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks and pay his respects to the nearly 3,000 people killed that day.

Biden will visit ground zero in New York City, the Pentagon and the memorial outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where United Flight 93 was forced down, the White House said Saturday. He will be accompanied by first lady Jill Biden.

Vice President Kamala Harris will travel to Shanksville, Pennsylvania, for a separate event before joining the president at the Pentagon, the White House said. Harris will travel with her spouse, Doug Emhoff.

Biden's itinerary is similar to the one President Barack Obama followed in 2011 on the 10th anniversary of the attacks. Obama's visit to New York City coincided with the opening of a memorial at the site where the iconic World Trade Center towers once stood.

Next Saturday's anniversary falls less than two weeks after the end of the nearly two-decade-long U.S. war in Afghanistan. The war was launched weeks after the 9/11 attacks to retaliate against the al-Qaida plotters and the Taliban, who provided them safe haven.

Biden has found support from the public for ending the conflict but has faced sharp criticism, even from allies, for the chaotic evacuation of U.S. troops and allied Afghans during the final two weeks of August.

Biden on Friday directed the declassification of certain documents related to the Sept. 11 attacks in a gesture toward victims' families who have long sought the records in hopes of implicating the Saudi government.

The conflict between the government and the families over what classified information could be made public came into the open last month after many relatives, survivors and first responders said they would object to Biden's participation in 9/11 memorial events if the documents remained classified.

Superville reported from Wilmington, Delaware.

## It's a girl, and a boy: Buttigieg celebrates 2 babies

WASHINGTON (AP) — Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and his husband, Chasten, are celebrating the arrival of not one — but two — bundles of joy.

The first openly gay person to be confirmed by the Senate for a Cabinet position had shared last month that the couple had become parents after seeking to adopt.

"We can't wait to share more soon," he tweeted then.

Buttigieg shared more on Saturday, tweeting a photo of Chasten and him each cradling a newborn.

"Chasten and I are beyond thankful for all the kind wishes since first sharing the news that we're becoming parents," the secretary wrote on his personal Twitter account. "We are delighted to welcome Penelope Rose and Joseph August Buttigieg to our family."

He released no other details about the babies, such as whether they are twins.

Buttigieg, 39, has talked publicly about his desire to become a father since his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020.

Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and Chasten, 32, were married in June 2018. Buttigieg's father, Joseph, died six months after the wedding.

## US: Afghan evacuees who fail initial screening Kosovo-bound

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

An ardent U.S. ally, Kosovo, has agreed to take in Afghanistan evacuees who fail to clear initial rounds of screening and host them for up to a year, a U.S. official said Saturday, in an intended fix to one of the security problems of the frantic U.S. evacuation from the Kabul airport.

The U.S. plan is likely to face objections from refugee advocates, who already complain of a lack of public disclosure and uncertain legal jurisdiction in the Biden administration's use of overseas screening sites. Those quickly set-up overseas transit sites are still operating near or at full speed to verify eligibility and look for security issues among thousands of Afghans and smaller numbers of Americans flown out of Taliban-held Afghanistan between Aug. 15 and Aug. 31.

The U.S. official spoke to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the plan. It was the first disclosure of what the U.S. intends to do with Afghans or other evacuees who have failed to clear initial rounds of screening or whose cases otherwise require more processing.

The U.S. Embassy in Kosovo in a statement later Saturday stressed that the arrangement did not mean Kosovo was taking evacuees who had been deemed ineligible for admission to the United States. "Some applicants are still in the process of obtaining needed documents and providing all the information required to qualify under U.S. law for immediate entry," the embassy statement said.

The Biden administration had resisted months of urging from some refugee organizations and veterans groups to bring former Afghan allies or others most vulnerable to targeting by the Taliban to American territory for security screening and other processing.

Several other countries for a time balked at temporarily hosting the United States' Afghan evacuees, for fear of getting stuck with the Americans' security problems. That all presented major obstacles in U.S. preparations for evacuation of vulnerable Afghans, even before Kabul fell to the Taliban on Aug. 15.

The Taliban's lightning conquest of Afghanistan set off the chaotic U.S.-military airlift out of the Kabul airport.

The administration within days of the Taliban takeover mobilized thousands of U.S. troops, diplomats, law enforcement agents, border and transportation workers, volunteers and others for screening, processing and caring for evacuees at more than a half-dozen U.S. naval stations, airfields and army bases in Europe and Asia. Officials and volunteers handed stuffed animals and toys to arriving children at many of the transit sites, and set up play areas.

The aim of the mobilization was to get deserving evacuees through to the United States as quickly as possible, and stop possible security risks among evacuees, and other evacuees who failed to qualify for relocation to the United States, before they touched foot on U.S. soil.

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Refugee groups criticize the Biden administration evacuation effort as too late, and too little planned. The hastiness of the airlifts after Kabul fell has led to a minority of people among the evacuees getting thousands of miles from the Kabul airport before Americans detected problems, including some evacuees with security issues.

In one instance, a red flag popped up on an evacuee's case as he was mid-flight between two of the overseas transit sites, another U.S. official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the processing. In a comparatively small number of cases, the U.S. transit sites overseas also are dealing with other evacuees who require further investigation, or who lie or destroy their identification in hopes of qualifying for immigration, that U.S. official said.

Some who managed to get through crushing crowds and U.S. and Taliban controls at the airport got put on planes and made it to transit sites, without any apparent eligibility for U.S. relocation as an at-risk Afghan, the official said.

Most Afghan evacuees are clearing processing in a matter of days at large transit sites that U.S. government employees set up quickly at military bases in Qatar, Germany and Italy, along with smaller sites elsewhere. Those evacuees then fly through Philadelphia or Washington Dulles airports for resettling in the United States.

Other U.S. officials have said they expect most or all Afghans whose cases may initially raise red flags or questions to pass further screening.

Eligible Afghans include those who worked for the U.S. government, or women's advocates, journalists or others vulnerable because of their role in Afghan civil society.

The U.S. official who disclosed the Kosovo plan said the transit centers "provide a safe place for diverse groups ... to complete their paperwork while we conduct security screenings before they continue to their final destination in the United States or in another country."

The U.S. will use a military camp, Bondsteel, that houses the U.S. army near the Kosovo capital for the further screening and processing of evacuees intended for resettlement in the United States, the U.S. official said. A site down the road that formerly housed road crews is to temporarily house evacuees bound for other NATO countries, under NATO's management and care.

Germany and Italy each have set time limits of no more than two weeks for U.S. processing of any one evacuee on their soil.

Kosovo considers itself a close ally of the United States since the U.S. spearheaded a 1999 NATO air campaign against Serbian forces brutalizing Kosovo civilians. The two Afghan evacuee sites sit along a highway named after President Joe Biden's late son, Beau Biden, who helped train local judges and prosecutors after the Kosovo war.

Kosovo leaders have agreed to one-year stays for the evacuees, with a possibility of extensions. Kosovo's prime minister and other officials turned out at the airport to welcome the first Afghan evacuees.

The majority of Kosovo's people are Muslim, like Afghans, although Kosovo's constitution establishes it as a secular state. Kosovo has a substantial minority of Orthodox Christian Serbs.

Refugee organizations say the U.S. hasn't been open or efficient in its treatment of evacuees at overseas transit centers.

"There's just a staggering lack of transparency from the administration about what is happening, who is there ... who to contact if there are issues" for evacuees at the sites, said Adam Bates, an attorney with the International Refugee Assistance Project, one of the main U.S. refugee working with with Afghans seeking escape from the Taliban.

He spoke before the Biden administration disclosed its plans for the Kosovo site.

## **Navy declares 5 missing sailors dead after helicopter crash**

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The U.S. Navy declared five missing sailors dead nearly a week after a helicopter crashed in the Pacific Ocean, shifting the search for them to a recovery operation on Saturday.

The move followed more than 72 hours of coordinated rescue efforts and nearly three dozen search and

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rescue flights to look for the wreckage, the Navy's Pacific fleet said in a Saturday statement.

The names of the sailors were being withheld until their next of kin have been notified.

Also injured on Tuesday were five other sailors who were on board the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier where the MH-60S helicopter was operating on the deck before the crash.

They were in stable conditions as of Saturday, said Lt. Samuel R. Boyle, a spokesman for the Pacific fleet.

An investigation into what caused the crash about 70 miles (112 kilometers) off San Diego is ongoing, but the fact that sailors aboard the carrier were injured raised questions about whether the helicopter or parts of it hit the Lincoln. When helicopters take off and land on the ship, there are ground crews present on the carrier nearby and other people working on deck.

The helicopter crashed during what the Navy described only as routine flight operations.

The MH-60S helicopter typically carries a crew of about four and is used in missions including combat support, humanitarian disaster relief and search and rescue.

The aircraft belongs to the Navy's Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 8.

## As flood alerts lit up phones, did 'warning fatigue' set in?

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Cellphones across New York and New Jersey pulsed with urgent warnings of catastrophic flooding as the fury of Hurricane Ida's remnants, carrying torrential rains, approached upper New Jersey and New York City on Wednesday.

The first alerts of severe weather blared across millions of phones at 8:41 p.m. that night when the National Weather Service warned of dangerous flash flooding from the looming storm. Officials would issue three more alerts, late into the night, urging people to immediately head for higher ground and to stay out of rising floodwaters.

A barrage of other alerts from a litany of apps lit up phone screens throughout the night — prompting some to wonder if people were just too inundated with information to take the threat seriously.

Experts call it "warning fatigue," and no one can be sure what role it might have played in a tragedy that killed scores of people across the Northeast, including more than two dozen in New Jersey and at least 11 in New York City — many drowning in their basement apartments or in cars trapped in submerged roadways.

The weather service acknowledged that in the past, alerts were being pushed out too often. There's been lots of handwringing over how to get more people to heed warnings.

"It's either they don't believe the information that they're hearing — they can't verify it — or there's some other reason that is completely out of anybody's control," said Ross Dickman, the meteorologist in charge of the National Weather Service in New York.

"It's up to that individual," he said, "but I think we need to do more work in understanding why people make the decisions that they do when they receive information and help get them to understand the impacts."

In some cases, people tried to flee too late and became trapped by floodwaters gushing so quickly, and with such force, that they could not open their doors to escape. Others might not have fathomed that flash flooding could also transform roadways into raging, impassable streams.

Last year, the federal weather service revamped its criteria for issuing alerts, mindful that it might have been overusing the Wireless Emergency Alert system, which first went into operation in 2012 and now broadcasts urgent warnings to more than 300 million cellular devices.

The weather service established a three-tier system in which alerts would only be sent out for the most severe flooding. Wednesday was the first time it issued an alert for the most catastrophic level for flash floods in New York and New Jersey, Dickman said.

The ubiquity of cellphones makes the devices a key tool for urgently informing the public of dangerous weather, including hurricanes and tornadoes. It's also used for Amber Alerts to enlist the public to help locate missing children. Authorities have also used cellphone alerts to help authorities nab dangerous

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people, including a terrorist who set off a bomb four years ago in New York City's Chelsea district.

New York City now has a million people subscribed to its wireless alert system that informs of a host of developments, including flooding but also disruptions in subway and other city services.

"People drowning in their basement apartments, in cars and so on is not something we typically would ever see in New York," said Irwin Redlener, a founding director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University who says officials have to have plans to accompany warnings.

"So if we have warnings that we're going to see very severe, rapid rainfall with flash flooding," he said, "what is it that we actually want people to do? Other than advise people it's going to happen, do we want them to go to shelters? If so, do we have shelters for them to go?"

The city's alert system, Notify NYC, launched as Hurricane Sandy approached nine years ago. The storm killed dozens in New York City and caused massive flooding.

"We do put a lot of thought into when we push that button — and we know the weather service does, as well — because we don't want to over warn and we want people to take our warning seriously when we when we're issuing messaging," said Benjamin Krakauer, an adviser to the Office of Emergency Management commissioner.

James Mielke, a video game designer who lives in downtown Manhattan, found the alerts more aggravating than useful.

"They sound like somebody just blew a soccer horn in your ear," Mielke said.

"It actually got to the point where I Googled it and figured out how to turn off those alerts so I could just, you know, not have a heart attack every time the big siren went off on my phone," Mielke said, adding that he thought he had turned off all the emergency alerts on his phone after Tropical Storm Henri blew through two weeks ago.

"This time they weren't as bad, but a few still got through," he said.

Henri brought lots of rain and fury but very little loss of life. That might have prompted complacency, said Jeannette Sutton, a disaster and risk expert specializing in communication at the University of Albany.

"So they got a message last week that said it's really really bad and then nothing happened. And then this week they get a message that's really really bad — do they take it seriously?" Sutton asked.

That's a question on the minds of weather and public safety officials, she said, adding that the seemingly simple act of pushing out alerts is actually complicated.

"We have been thinking about alerts and warnings since the 1950s, and how to increase their effectiveness, and thinking about how to help people make really good decisions when they're faced with life-threatening situations," she said.

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Associated Press writer Michael R. Sisak contributed to this report.

## Tens of thousands protest for gay marriage in Switzerland

BERLIN (AP) — Tens of thousands protested in Switzerland on Saturday for the legalization of same-sex marriage in the Alpine country.

The protests came ahead of a national referendum on Sept. 26 on the legalization of gay marriage, which has already been introduced in many other European countries including Germany, Austria, France and the Netherlands.

Public broadcaster SRF reported that tens of thousands participated in the Zurich Pride parade which had the slogan "You can do it. Marriage for everyone now."

So far, same-sex couples in Switzerland can only get official approval for civil unions, which are not on equal footing as marriages. If a majority votes for the legalization of same-sex marriage in Switzerland this would also allow couple to adopt children. In addition, lesbian couples would have easier access to sperm donations if they wanted to start a family and it would be easier for foreign partners to get Swiss citizenship.

Opponents of the legalization say that marriage should be reserved for a man and a woman together

only and that children should have the right to have both a traditional father and a mother. SRF reported that 70 groups from the LGBTQ community supported the protests.

## Origin story of the Texas law that could upend Roe v. Wade

By JESSICA GRESKO and PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

The road to a Texas law that bans most abortions in the state, sidestepping for now the Supreme Court's landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, began in a town called Waskom, population 1,600.

The Supreme Court's decision this past week not to interfere with the state's strict abortion law, provoked outrage from liberals and cheers from many conservatives. President Joe Biden assailed it. But the decision also astonished many that Texas could essentially outmaneuver Supreme Court precedent on women's constitutional right to abortion.

Texas' abortion law S.B. 8 follows a model first used in Waskom to ban abortion within its boundaries in 2019. The novel legal approach used by the city on Texas' border with Louisiana is one envisioned by a former top lawyer for the state.

Right to Life East Texas director Mark Lee Dickson, 36, a Southern Baptist minister, championed Waskom's abortion ban. Through his state senator, Bryan Hughes, he met Jonathan F. Mitchell, a former top lawyer for the state of Texas. Mitchell became his attorney and advised him on crafting the ordinance, Dickson said in an interview.

The ordinance shields Waskom from lawsuits by saying city officials can't enforce the abortion ban. Instead, private citizens can sue anyone who performs an abortion in the city or assists someone in obtaining one. The law was largely symbolic, however, because the city did not have a clinic performing abortions.

Nearly three dozen other cities in the state followed Waskom's lead. Among them is Lubbock, where a Planned Parenthood clinic stopped performing abortions this year as a result.

Mitchell has declined interviews, but Dickson called him a "brilliant guy" and said he was "extremely grateful" for his help. Hughes, who later became the author of the Texas law, echoed those sentiments. The two have known each other for years.

Though Hughes would not assign credit for Texas' approach to a single person, saying many lawyers and law professors advised on the legislation, ultimately S.B. 8 followed the Waskom model in terms of how the law is enforced.

The law, signed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in May, prohibits abortions once medical professionals can detect cardiac activity, usually around six weeks and before many women know they're pregnant. At least 12 other states have enacted bans early in pregnancy, but all have been blocked from going into effect.

Unlike laws in other states, however, Texas' law is unique in prohibiting state officials from enforcing the ban. Instead, it created a so-called private right of action allowing anyone — even someone outside Texas — to sue abortion providers and anyone else who helps someone get an abortion. Under the law, anyone who successfully sues another person would be entitled to at least \$10,000.

The private right-of-action wrinkle envisioned by Mitchell has so far kept challenges to the law from succeeding.

Mitchell, 45, has spent the last 15 years moving back and forth between working in government and teaching at law schools such as Stanford and the University of Texas at Austin. A graduate of Wheaton College and the University of Chicago Law School, he was a law clerk to the late conservative Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

And he went on to serve as Texas solicitor general from 2010 to 2015. He was a volunteer attorney on former President Donald Trump's transition team and was unsuccessfully nominated by Trump to lead an agency tasked with making the government work better.

University of Chicago law professor William Baude called him a "born law professor," "creative and knowledgeable."

A law review article Mitchell wrote that was published in 2018 gave guidance to lawmakers worried about courts blocking their laws. He said lawmakers could protect their legislation by including a private

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right of action. He said the strategy could apply to a wide range of laws such as campaign finance, gun control and abortion.

"It is practically impossible to bring a pre-enforcement challenge to statutes that establish private rights of action, because the litigants who will enforce the statute are hard to identify until they actually bring suit," he wrote in one footnote.

In the case of Texas' law, things have played out as he predicted.

Still, even some conservatives have questioned Texas' approach. Dissenting from the high court's decision not to step in this past week, Chief Justice John Roberts called Texas' law "not only unusual, but unprecedented."

"The legislature has imposed a prohibition on abortions after roughly six weeks, and then essentially delegated enforcement of that prohibition to the populace at large," he wrote. "The desired consequence appears to be to insulate the State from responsibility for implementing and enforcing the regulatory regime."

Liberal Justice Sonia Sotomayor was blunt. "It cannot be the case that a State can evade federal judicial scrutiny by outsourcing the enforcement of unconstitutional laws to its citizenry," she wrote.

The high court's action, however, is unlikely to be the final word on the law. More legal challenges now that the law is in force are likely.

GOP lawmakers and abortion opponents in at least five other Republican-controlled states — Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, North Dakota and South Dakota — said they are considering pushing bills similar to the Texas law and its citizen-enforcement provision.

Gresko reported from Washington and Weber from Austin, Texas.

## Democrats see consequences from redistricting reform push

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Democrats argue that the once-a-decade process of redrawing political maps shouldn't be a partisan cage match. In the name of good government and balance, they've pushed for independent commissions to do the work of rebalancing population changes into congressional districts.

They're about to feel the consequences of their focus on fairness.

In Democratic-controlled Colorado, Virginia and Oregon, new congressional maps drawn by commissions or bipartisan power-sharing agreements are unlikely to give the party the sort of political advantages it could have otherwise enjoyed.

Republicans, meanwhile, haven't given up their power, controlling the process in 20 states, including Florida, Texas and North Carolina.

The imbalance could come with major consequences. Democrats currently control the House of Representatives by just an eight-seat margin. Choosing not to seize advantages in redistricting could cost Democrats the House.

"There should be concern within the Democratic Party that we may have been too quick to seek reform without really looking at the long-term implications," said Rick Ridder, a Democratic strategist in Denver.

This year, commissions will draw 95 congressional seats that otherwise would have been drawn solely by Democrats and only 13 that would have been drawn by Republicans.

To be sure, not all Democratic states have sacrificed power for reform. Democratic-controlled states like Illinois and Maryland are heavily gerrymandered. And Democratic-controlled state legislatures can overrule commissions in New Mexico and especially New York, where the party could erase several GOP House seats if it controls the map.

But given the narrow margins, the commission states matter. In Colorado, where President Joe Biden won by 13 percentage points last year, the nonpartisan commission released a preliminary map on Friday which could lead the two parties to evenly split the state's eight congressional seats. In contrast, some Democratic maps split 6-2 in their favor. The difference, a net of four congressional seats, is half the cur-

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rent Democratic margin in the House.

In Virginia, where Democrats control the legislature and hold the governor's office, party leaders are worried the bipartisan commission could deadlock, kicking control of redistricting to the state Supreme Court, dominated by GOP-appointed judges. The court would likely hire experts to draw the maps determining the political composition of the state's 11 congressional districts and its state legislative seats.

And in Oregon, a solidly blue state that is gaining a congressional seat, the Democrats who control a supermajority in the state legislature agreed to evenly divide their redistricting committee between Democrats and Republicans.

On Friday, the two parties released dueling maps for the state. The Democratic map shores up one swing district represented by Democratic Rep. Peter DeFazio by pulling in more voters of his party, and creates a safe Democratic district west of Portland for Oregon's sixth and newest district. The Republican version keeps both districts competitive. A deadlock kicks the process to the Democratic secretary of state.

Good government advocates have long argued for nonpartisan commissions to oversee redistricting to end gerrymandering, the centuries-old practice of drawing districts designed to pack opponents' voters into one place, or scatter them across districts to minimize their voting power. The practice shrinks the number of competitive districts, hardening partisan polarization, and can blunt the political power of some racial and ethnic groups.

Republicans argue that both parties gerrymander. Democratic worries about the Colorado and Virginia commissions expose the party's hypocrisy, said Adam Kincaid, executive director of the National Republican Redistricting Trust, which oversees line-drawing for the GOP. "It's as if they see these commissions as an extension of the Democratic Party and not as the fair-minded independent bodies they say they are."

Kincaid's Democratic counterpart, Kelly Ward Burton of the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, fired back that Democrats have truly pushed redistricting reforms, unlike the GOP.

"Republicans know they are out of step with where this country is going and growing, which is why they have to manipulate the maps and the voting laws in order to win," Burton said. "Trusting the voters and supporting maps that fairly and accurately represent the communities of this country is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness."

Democrats have proposed requiring nonpartisan commissions to draw lines in every state as part of a sweeping federal election bill, which is stalled in the Senate due to unanimous Republican opposition.

Currently, 10 states have redistricting commissions that draw lines for congressional districts, including reliably Republican Montana and swing state Arizona, where the GOP would otherwise control the process.

However, six of the commission states are ones whose governments are controlled by Democrats, including the nation's biggest state, California, with its 52 congressional seats. That's part of the reason the GOP controls the redistricting process in states representing 187 congressional seats, and Democrats in ones with only 75 seats.

Often, nonpartisan commissions are pushed by the party out of power. California, for example, cannot be gerrymandered by Democrats because its last Republican governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, passed a 2008 ballot measure creating a nonpartisan commission.

In Michigan, where Republicans aggressively gerrymandered when they had full control of state government in 2010, groups with ties to Democrats in 2018 pushed a ballot measure taking the pen from the GOP legislature and giving it to a nonpartisan commission.

In Virginia, when Republicans controlled the state legislature in 2019, Democrats in that body voted to put a commission measure on the ballot. The following year, after Democrats took control of the legislature, only some Democrats took the required second vote to place the measure before voters, now aided enthusiastically by out-of-power Republicans.

The initiative passed overwhelmingly in November of 2020, as voters handed Biden a 10 percentage point win.

Half of the commission's 16 members are state legislators. If the commission formally deadlocks, the state Supreme Court draws the maps, a prospect that alarms Democrats given its lack of progress so far.



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"We have made a mistake," said Lashrecse Aird, a Democratic delegate who voted against the measure both times it came up in the state legislature.

In Colorado, Democrats in 2018 backed a ballot measure to hand control of redistricting to a nonpartisan commission that does not include legislators. The initiative was first proposed by a wealthy businessman and former Republican. Some Democrats signed on enthusiastically, others grudgingly, but eventually the party threw its full backing behind it.

But the commission's maps, though inching the way Democrats have lobbied for, still leave the state as something of a tossup. Under the latest version, the state's 4-3 split would be preserved and a new seat would appear in Denver's northern suburbs encompassing an area that voted Democratic by only 1.9 percentage points in 2020. Strategists acknowledge that seat could easily fall into Republican hands during a bad election cycle — like they may face next year.

"This looks like a 4-3-1 map in a state that went for Biden by 13.5," said Craig Hughes, a veteran Colorado Democratic strategist. "That's not a good result for Democrats."

Some Democrats have been grumbling that the party erred in backing the commission.

"I give Republicans a lot of credit — they play a ball game and if they lose they change the rules," said Wellington Webb, a former Denver mayor who has objected to using the commission. "Democrats, we normally always fall on the category of let's be fair."

Republicans have disagreed with some of the maps, but will be thrilled if the state's House districts stay relatively evenly split.

"As Republicans, we will look at that as a gift from the gods," Greg Brophy, a former GOP state lawmaker involved in a group lobbying the commission, said, "because we didn't deserve this."

Sara Cline and Andrew Selsky in Salem, Oregon, contributed to this report.

## Florida grapples with COVID-19's deadliest phase yet

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Funeral director Wayne Bright has seen grief piled upon grief during the latest COVID-19 surge.

A woman died of the virus, and as her family was planning the funeral, her mother was also struck down. An aunt took over arrangements for the double funeral, only to die of COVID-19 herself two weeks afterward.

"That was one of the most devastating things ever," said Bright, who also arranged the funeral last week of one of his closest friends.

Florida is in the grip of its deadliest wave of COVID-19 since the pandemic began, a disaster driven by the highly contagious delta variant.

While Florida's vaccination rate is slightly higher than the national average, the Sunshine State has an outsize population of elderly people, who are especially vulnerable to the virus; a vibrant party scene; and a Republican governor who has taken a hard line against mask requirements, vaccine passports and business shutdowns.

As of mid-August, the state was averaging 244 deaths per day, up from just 23 a day in late June and eclipsing the previous peak of 227 during the summer of 2020. (Because of both the way deaths are logged in Florida and lags in reporting, more recent figures on fatalities per day are incomplete.)

Hospitals have had to rent refrigerated trucks to store more bodies. Funeral homes have been overwhelmed.

Cristina Miles, a mother of five from Orange Park, is among those facing more than one loss at a time. Her husband died after contracting COVID-19, and less than two weeks later, her mother-in-law succumbed to the virus.

"I feel we are all kind of in a weird dream state," she said, adding that her children are grieving differently, with one shutting down, another feeling inspired to pass a hard swimming test, and the oldest going

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about her life as usual.

Hospitals have been swamped with patients who, like Miles' husband and mother-in-law, hadn't gotten vaccinated.

In a positive sign, the number of people in the hospital with COVID-19 in Florida has dropped over the past two weeks from more than 17,000 to 14,200 on Friday, indicating the surge is easing.

Florida made an aggressive effort early on to vaccinate its senior citizens. But Dr. Kartik Cherabuddi, a professor of infectious diseases at the University of Florida, said the raw number of those who have yet to get the shot is still large, given Florida's elderly population of 4.6 million.

"Even 10% is still a very large number, and then folks living with them who come in contact with them are not vaccinated," Cherabuddi said. "With delta, things spread very quickly."

Cherabuddi said there is also a "huge difference" in attitudes toward masks in Florida this summer compared with last year. This summer, "if you traveled around the state, it was like we are not really in a surge," he said.

Gov. Ron DeSantis has strongly opposed certain mandatory measures to keep the virus in check, saying people should be trusted to make decisions for themselves. He has asserted, too, that the spike in cases is seasonal as Floridians spend more time indoors to escape the heat.

At his funeral home in Tampa, Bright is working weekdays and weekends, staying past midnight sometimes.

"Usually we serve between five and six families a week. Right now, we are probably seeing 12 to 13 new families every week," he said. "It's nonstop. We are just trying to keep up with the volume."

He had to arrange the burial of one of his closest friends, a man he had entrusted with the access code to his house. They used to carpool each other's kids to school, and their families would gather for birthday and Super Bowl parties.

"It is very, very difficult to go through this process for someone you love so dearly," he said.

Pat Seemann, a nurse practitioner whose company has nearly 500 elderly, homebound patients in central Florida, had not lost a single patient during the first waves. And then the variant she calls "the wrecking ball" hit.

In the past month, she lost seven patients in two weeks, including a husband and wife who died within days of each other.

"I cried all weekend. I was devastated, angry," she said.

Overall, more than 46,300 people have died of COVID-19 in Florida, which ranks 17th in per-capita deaths among the states.

The majority of the deaths this summer — like last summer — are among the elderly. Of the 2,345 people whose recent deaths were reported over the past week, 1,479 of them were 65 and older — or 63%.

"The focus needs to be on who's dying and who's ending up in the hospital," Seeman said. "It's still going after the elderly."

But the proportion of under-65 people dying of COVID-19 has grown substantially, which health officials attribute to lower vaccination rates in those age groups.

Aaron Jaggi, 35, was trying to get healthy before he died of COVID-19, 12 hours after his older brother Free Jaggi, 41, lost his life to the virus. They were overweight, which increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness, and on the fence about getting vaccinated, thinking the risk was minimal because they both worked from home, said Brittany Pequignot, who has lived with the family at various times and is like an adopted daughter.

After their death, the family found a whiteboard that belonged to Aaron. It listed his daily goals for sit-ups and push-ups.

"He was really trying," Pequignot said.

## Florida grapples with COVID-19's deadliest phase yet

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

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He had to arrange the burial of one of his closest friends, a man he had entrusted with the access code to his house. They used to carpool each other's kids to school, and their families would gather for birthday and Super Bowl parties.

"It is very, very difficult to go through this process for someone you love so dearly," he said.

Pat Seemann, a nurse practitioner whose company has nearly 500 elderly, homebound patients in central Florida, had not lost a single patient during the first waves. And then the variant she calls "the wrecking

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ball" hit.

In the past month, she lost seven patients in two weeks, including a husband and wife who died within days of each other.

"I cried all weekend. I was devastated, angry," she said.

Overall, more than 46,300 people have died of COVID-19 in Florida, which ranks 17th in per-capita deaths among the states.

The majority of the deaths this summer — like last summer — are among the elderly. Of the 2,345 people whose recent deaths were reported over the past week, 1,479 of them were 65 and older — or 63%.

"The focus needs to be on who's dying and who's ending up in the hospital," Seeman said. "It's still going after the elderly."

But the proportion of under-65 people dying of COVID-19 has grown substantially, which health officials attribute to lower vaccination rates in those age groups.

Aaron Jaggi, 35, was trying to get healthy before he died of COVID-19, 12 hours after his older brother Free Jaggi, 41, lost his life to the virus. They were overweight, which increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness, and on the fence about getting vaccinated, thinking the risk was minimal because they both worked from home, said Brittany Pequignot, who has lived with the family at various times and is like an adopted daughter.

After their death, the family found a whiteboard that belonged to Aaron. It listed his daily goals for sit-ups and push-ups.

"He was really trying," Pequignot said.

## Report: More sharks, rays threatened with extinction

PARIS (AP) — The world's sharks and rays have seen declines in their populations since 2014 and more and more are now threatened with extinction, according to a new red list released Saturday at a global conference aimed at protecting dwindling species.

The Komodo dragon is now listed as endangered, notably because of rising sea levels and rising temperatures in its Indonesian habitat. Ebonies and rosewoods threatened by logging were among trees put on the list for the first time this year.

There are signs of hope, too — fishing quotas have allowed several tuna species to be put on the "path to recovery," according to the announcement from The International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Some 37% of the world's sharks and rays are considered in danger as of 2021, up from 33% seven years ago, the IUCN announced. Overfishing, a loss of habitat and climate change explain the upward trend, it said. Oceanic shark populations have dropped by 71% since 1970.

But the progress in reviving tuna populations and some other species "is the demonstration that if states and other actors take the right actions ... it is possible to recover," IUCN director Bruno Oberle told reporters in the southern French city of Marseille.

The IUCN Red List Unit reassesses hundreds of species each year. Of the some 138,000 species the group tracks, more than 38,000 are threatened with extinction.

Several recent studies have shown that many of the planet's ecosystems are severely strained by global warming, deforestation, habitat degradation, pollution and other threats.

More than half of all bird of prey species worldwide are declining in population, and 18 species are critically endangered. Warming temperatures and melting ice are projected to imperil 70% of Emperor penguin colonies by 2050 and 98% by 2100.

Actor Harrison Ford made an impassioned plea to safeguard biodiversity at the opening of the World Conservation Congress in Marseille on Friday.

"It's hard to watch the rise of nationalism in the face of a global threat that requires global cooperation, global action," he said. "It's hard to read the headlines, floods, fires, famines, plagues and tell your children that everything is all right. It's not all right. Damn it, it's not all right."

"C'mon everybody," he said. "Let's get to work."

Environmental groups are urging governments to take bolder actions to protect the oceans, the Amazon and other crucial ecosystems.

The conference runs until Sept. 11. Among topics are the links between climate change and biodiversity loss, and the ethics of genetic enhancement to increase species' chances of survival. The talks are also meant to inform the U.N.'s global climate summit, the COP26, which will be held in November in Glasgow, Scotland.

## Hurricane Ida turns spotlight on Louisiana power grid issues

By JEFF AMY Associated Press

Power out, high voltage lines on the ground, weeks until electricity is restored in some places: The dismal state of power in Hurricane Ida's wake is a distressingly familiar scenario for Entergy Corp., Louisiana's largest electrical utility.

The power company has grappled with other widespread outages after Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike — not to mention Laura, Delta and Zeta — over the past decade and a half. Other Louisiana and Gulf Coast utilities have faced similar disasters, sometimes needing to rebuild entire networks. If anything, power restoration has gotten faster in recent decades.

Still, critics question the enormity of the outage from Hurricane Ida and why it is still so widespread nearly a week after the storm slammed into the state with 150 mph (241 kph) winds.

The concerns are most acute in the New Orleans area. All eight of the transmission lines that link a region of more than 900,000 people to power from the outside world failed during Ida — even though storm damage in the area was less severe than to the south and west. As of Friday, Entergy had restored three of the lines.

"For all eight to fail, I'm just wondering whether this could have been prevented and that's what we're going to be looking into," New Orleans City Council Member Helena Moreno, who oversees energy regulation in the city, told WWL-TV.

While Entergy was heavily criticized for widespread failures and slow restoration after Hurricane Gustav in 2008, many are holding back from pointing fingers post-Ida. Gov. John Bel Edwards said Wednesday that "nobody" is satisfied with a weeklong restoration process. "But I am mindful that we just had the strongest hurricane, at least tied for the strongest, that the state has ever experienced."

However, Entergy critic Logan Burke of the Alliance for Affordable Energy, a New Orleans group that seeks lower costs and greener energy, says the company's grid hasn't met expectations.

"We've been led to believe the transmission system was built for this level of wind, but it couldn't have possibly been," Burke said.

The isolation of metro New Orleans has always made power supply tricky, because there aren't enough power plants inside the area to meet needs. But regulators are likely to ask why Entergy didn't use a new \$210 million plant in eastern New Orleans to restart electricity.

When it was lobbying the city to build the facility — a process during which the company hired actors to pose as plant supporters, prompting a \$5 million fine — Entergy told officials the plant would have what's called "black start" capability, the ability to power up a blacked-out grid.

"It didn't work as advertised," said Andrew Tuozzolo, Moreno's chief of staff.

The plant does have black start capability, but Entergy determined that a small disturbance could knock the plant offline and that it would be better to use it along with electricity from elsewhere for greater stability in balancing the power load, said Entergy Louisiana CEO Philip May.

"If we have the ability to pursue a path ... that allows us to do this in a more controlled and more robust way, that's going to be the path we pursue," he said.

Entergy's transmission troubles were underscored when a high voltage tower crumpled beside the Mississippi River in the New Orleans suburb of Avondale during Ida. The utility says it builds new transmission towers to withstand winds up to 150 mph, but the company has said its oldest towers were only designed to withstand 100 mph (160 kph) winds. It's unclear how many older towers remain.

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Asked that question, Entergy spokesman Jerry Nappi replied in an email that the company seeks to upgrade "priority structures" under yearly plans and bring up damaged towers to "more resilient standards" when repairing or replacing them.

Flying debris hitting lines is often a bigger problem than damage to towers, and the overall transmission system may have been knocked offline not by destroyed towers but as circuits tripped. May has said the Avondale tower recently passed an inspection and hadn't been reinforced because it was already "robustly engineered."

Regulators could force Entergy to further toughen its grid, lessening future risks from the more frequent and severe storms wrought by climate change. Florida, for example, now requires every privately owned utility to submit an annual plan for making the electrical system more resistant to outages.

But upgrades cost money — and money usually comes from customers.

"When you're looking at something like storm hardening, the important thing to remember is that ultimately it is going to be the people that are paying all of these costs," said Ted Kury, director of energy studies at the University of Florida's Public Utility Research Center.

Shouldering upgrade costs could burden customers who are still paying for old repairs. Louisiana Public Service Commission documents show Entergy customers outside the city of New Orleans have been charged nearly \$2 billion to rebuild lines and refill storm damage reserve funds since 2005.

Customers will be paying for 2008 hurricanes Gustav and Ike through next summer; and Isaac, which hit in 2012, through 2026. Entergy wants another \$2 billion to cover costs from Laura, Delta and Zeta last year. Repairing Ida's damage will cost still more.

With customers paying for old damage, it's hard to focus on investing for the future, Burke said.

"It sucks up all the time and energy and capacity as costs start hitting bills," he said.

Some upgrade ideas have been rejected as too expensive or technically impractical. While Louisiana encourages burying local distribution lines in new developments, studies have suggested that burying high voltage transmission lines could cost billions. There are also questions about feasibility, Kury said, because underground transmission lines can overheat and be damaged by water.

David Dismukes executive director of the Center for Energy Studies at Louisiana State University, said he would "caution people that redundancy comes with a big cost, and usually when you start working and penciling the numbers out, the economics usually don't work out on this kind of thing."

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An earlier version of this story said Entergy was fined \$1 million for hiring actors. It should have said Entergy was fined \$5 million.

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Associated Press writer Melinda Deslatte contributed to this report.

## **Virus pummels French Polynesia, straining ties with Paris**

By ESTHER CUNEO Associated Press

PAPEETE, Tahiti (AP) — France's worst coronavirus outbreak is unfolding 12 time zones away from Paris, devastating Tahiti and other idyllic islands of French Polynesia.

The South Pacific archipelagos lack enough oxygen, ICU beds and morgue space — and their vaccination rate is barely half the national average. Simultaneous outbreaks on remote islands and atolls are straining the ability of local authorities to evacuate patients to the territory's few hospitals.

"The problem is, there are a lot of deaths before we get there," lamented Vincent Simon, the head of the regional emergency service.

French Polynesia is France's latest challenge in juggling resources to battle the pandemic in former colonies that stretch around the world. With more than 2,800 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, it holds France's record for the highest infection rate.

And that's only an estimate: Things are so bad that the multi-ethnic territory of about 300,000 has stopped counting new infections as local health authorities redeployed medical staff to focus on patient

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care and vaccinations instead of testing.

Of the 463 virus-related deaths reported in French Polynesia throughout the pandemic, most took place over the past month. Vaccine skepticism, high obesity and diabetes rates, and the decision to reopen to some tourists this summer have been among the explanations for the current health crisis.

Tensions have surfaced with other virus-ravaged French territories. While the central government in Paris sent hundreds of health care workers to the French Caribbean over the summer, Polynesia received just 10 backup nurses. After weeks of pleading by Polynesian officials, the French government promised this week to send 100 more.

French Polynesia, whose 118 islands stretch across an area as large as Europe, has broad autonomy from Paris but relies on the central government for health care.

"We need help. We have said it before: we cannot get by without it," Tony Tekuataoa, the head of emergency services at the French Polynesia Hospital Center in Tahiti, told local television.

More than 330 people are hospitalized with the virus, including 55 in intensive care – well beyond the territory's capacity.

Beds, mattresses, oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators: Everything is lacking. With 15 to 20 new deaths per day, funeral directors can no longer meet the demands of families. The macabre dance of ambulances and coffins animates local media coverage.

Hospital authorities are opening new COVID-19 wards. All medical and paramedical professionals have been requisitioned. The regulatory agency dispatches equipment and personnel in a permanent state of emergency.

The surge is taking a toll on medical workers' mental health. Meanwhile, disputes over vaccinations are tearing some families apart.

"The caregivers were not prepared to see so many deaths," said Philippe Dupire, medical director of the French Polynesia Hospital Center.

The hospital's workers appealed directly to Macron with a photo on its Facebook page showing the lobby where the president made a speech during a July visit and the same lobby a month later – now packed with 20 hospital beds occupied by virus patients.

To curb infections, local authorities imposed a curfew at first, then localized lockdowns and now they've shut down schools. Obligatory vaccinations have been announced for some sectors, despite objections.

Vaccinations are rising, but eight months into the campaign, only 38% of the total population is fully vaccinated, while 50% have received a first dose. That compares to 67% and 73% nationwide.

Meanwhile, more than 90% of those in intensive care are unvaccinated, as were a large majority of those who have died.

The government's minister for overseas territories, Sebastien Lecornu, blamed the lag on vaccine skepticism in a population particularly sensitive to disinformation. Distrust of authorities is also an issue among indigenous populations, scarred by the legacy of France's nuclear tests on Polynesian atolls and decades of efforts for reparations.

Concerned about the potentially deadly consequences of vaccine avoidance, the leader of an independence party appealed to all communities to get the injections and to reject false information shared online.

While infections may be peaking in French Polynesia, experts fear a long, high plateau instead of a quick recovery. Epidemiologist Jean-Marc Ségalin said "nothing very significant is happening that shows an improvement."

The territory has one bright spot: Nuku Hiva, in the Marquesas Islands, where French Polynesia's vaccination campaign began in January and 85% of the population is fully vaccinated.

In a Tahiti rehab center, a 50-year-old man said he had avoided vaccines because of social media posts calling them dangerous. Choking with emotion, he described the fear and regret that consumed him while hospitalized.

One woman described struggling for air while in intensive care and being unable to keep her eyes open. She urged anyone within earshot to get vaccinated.

Angela Charlton in Paris contributed.

Follow all AP stories on the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>.

## Jessica Chastain and real-life pal Oscar Isaac redo Bergman

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Jessica Chastain has been friends with Oscar Isaac since their Julliard days but says it was “a blessing and a curse” to play his wife in a remake of Ingmar Bergman’s classic “Scenes From a Marriage,” which premiered Saturday at the Venice Film Festival.

It was a blessing because they didn’t need to get to know one another and could be brutally honest with one another. But it was also a curse because they couldn’t take a break from their togetherness and got to the point “where we were reading each others minds!”

“So I was like ‘Get out of my head!’” Chastain told reporters ahead of the premiere. “I felt on this job that there was no quiet time.”

The project was an intense one, reimagining in a contemporary American context the unravelling of a marriage depicted in Bergman’s 1973 Swedish television miniseries that starred Bergman’s longtime partner, Liv Ullmann. In this five-episode HBO series directed by Hagai Levi, the gender roles are essentially flipped and the circumstances brought up-to-date.

Isaac, who has two other movies showing at Venice, agreed that their close friendship posed “its own challenges” when filming such an inherently fraught project since “you care about the person so much.”

The two, who starred together in the 2014 “A Most Violent Year,” used an intimacy coordinator and lots of talking to map out the bedroom scenes to make sure both were comfortable.

Isaac, who noted that their children are together in the same play group, said he and Chastain also watched films together try to figure out how to represent the sexual side of their relationship to make it seem truthful without going overboard.

“There are so many times you don’t buy it, and then it can get too gratuitous and you don’t really buy that either,” Isaac said.

Chastain said she appreciated talking through the characters and mapping out their relationship ahead of time.

“I would still get embarrassed, so bourbon helped a lot,” Chastain said, giggling. “But the level of trust was high.”

## Legal shield for Purdue Pharma owners is at heart of appeals

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

The end of the Purdue Pharma bankruptcy case has left a bitter taste for those who wanted to see more accountability for members of the Sackler family.

The Sacklers will give up ownership of the company, go out of the international opioid business and pay \$4.5 billion in cash and charitable assets under the settlement. But they also will escape any future liability over the nation’s addiction and overdose crisis as part of the deal that was given preliminary approval this week by a federal bankruptcy judge.

Some state attorneys general and one federal government office are planning appeals.

The question at the heart of their arguments: Is it appropriate for members of a wealthy family that did not file for bankruptcy themselves to get such a broad protection?

Attorneys and victim advocates involved in a case that included lawsuits from some 3,000 governments and other entities said the members of the Sackler family who have owned Purdue played instrumental roles in overseeing the company and marketing OxyContin. Critics say the company’s best-selling prescription painkiller helped fuel the opioid crisis in the U.S.

“They get to retain literally billions of dollars they took out of Purdue Pharma while it was causing ad-



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diction and death all across our country and all across the world," Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh told The Associated Press in an interview.

Frosh said he was considering an appeal.

Lawyers for Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Washington state and the U.S. Bankruptcy Trustee, an arm of the federal Department of Justice tasked with protecting the bankruptcy process, have said they intend to appeal.

Under the settlement, Sackler family members are getting what's known in the bankruptcy world as a "third-party release." It's one of the most contentious issues in bankruptcy law.

The releases have been used in complicated bankruptcy cases involving multiple parties to encourage settlements that might be difficult or impossible to reach otherwise. Dow Chemical, an owner of Dow Corning, was released from lawsuits in the 1990s over dangers of the latter company's silicone breast implants. Owners of companies that produced asbestos were protected from lawsuits over cancer risks associated with their products that began in the 1980s.

Some federal appeals courts have rejected the releases, but the majority have accepted them. That includes the 2nd Circuit, which could handle appeals of decisions from U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Robert Drain, who ruled in the Purdue case from his courthouse in White Plains, New York.

Longshot legislation pending in Congress, titled "The SACKLER Act," would ban third-party releases. Even if it were adopted, it would be too late to affect its namesake case.

In his preliminary ruling from the bench earlier this week, Drain discussed at length the reasons he was allowing the protection for family members as part of the settlement.

"I wish the plan had provided for more" from Sackler family members, he said, "but I will not jeopardize what the plan does provide by denying confirmation."

The settlement forces the Sacklers to give up ownership of Purdue and turns it into a new company with a board of directors appointed by government officials. Money from the family, company accounts and future profits are to be used to pay some individual victims of the opioid crisis and to fund treatment, education programs and other efforts to combat the epidemic.

The crisis has been linked to more than 500,000 overdose deaths in the U.S. since 2000 involving either prescription painkillers or illicit ones such as heroin or illegally made fentanyl.

Purdue Pharma, based in Stamford, Connecticut, has estimated that the settlement could be worth \$10 billion, including the value of overdose antidote and addiction treatment drugs it's been developing.

Sackler family members, whose combined wealth has been estimated at over \$10 billion, have been clear that without protection from lawsuits, they would not contribute to the settlement.

During a hearing on the reorganization plan last month, experts said it could be impossible to force payments without a settlement because much of the family's fortune is overseas. The bankruptcy judge said some family members are foreign citizens, potentially putting their assets further out of reach.

A further complication: Purdue pleaded guilty last year to federal criminal offenses, agreeing to a \$2 billion forfeiture. Under their plea deal, the company has to pay only \$225 million of that to the federal government as long as it settles its other opioid lawsuits and uses proceeds to fight the crisis. If the bankruptcy settlement is upended, Purdue would have to pay the federal government another \$1.7 billion — and that would leave far less money to divide between the states, local governments and opioid victims.

"If they continue to appeal, if they win, what do they get?" said Lindsey Simon, an assistant law professor at the University of Georgia School of Law who teaches bankruptcy law. "The answer is, probably complete chaos and less money."

That's a view that many state government lawyers have adopted.

About half the nation's state attorneys general, including nearly every Democrat to hold the office, initially opposed the settlement. In an interview with the AP last June, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey heavily criticized the protections for Sackler family members: "They want to continue to be rich and they will likely be richer after paying the settlement than they are today. That doesn't sit right with me, and it shouldn't sit right with anyone," she said.

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But in July, Healey and the majority of other attorneys general came to accept the plan after Sackler family members agreed to pay more money and dole it out faster. Purdue also agreed to make public millions of company documents, including some that would normally be protected by attorney-client privilege.

Those still pushing against the deal include Connecticut Attorney General William Tong.

"This is some of the worst corporate misconduct we have ever seen," he told the AP. "It's not just about taking the deal or getting as much money as you can and getting out of Dodge. It's about doing justice, holding them accountable."

Anthony Casey, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, said those upset at the judge for the third-party releases might not be steeped in bankruptcy law: "The criticisms of him are a little outrageous in the fact that he's doing what bankruptcy judges do."

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Sept. 5, the 248th day of 2021. There are 117 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 5, 1972, the Palestinian group Black September attacked the Israeli Olympic delegation at the Munich Games, killing 11 Israelis and a police officer. German forces killed five of the gunmen.

On this date:

In 1774, the first Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia.

In 1864, voters in Louisiana approved a new state constitution abolishing slavery.

In 1939, four days after war had broken out in Europe, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a proclamation declaring U.S. neutrality in the conflict.

In 1957, the novel "On the Road," by Jack Kerouac, was first published by Viking Press.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford escaped an attempt on his life by Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, a disciple of Charles Manson, in Sacramento, California.

In 1984, the space shuttle Discovery ended its inaugural flight as it landed at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1986, four hijackers who had seized a Pan Am jumbo jet on the ground in Karachi, Pakistan, opened fire when the lights inside the plane failed; a total of 20 people were killed before Pakistani commandos stormed the jetliner.

In 1991, the 35th annual Naval Aviation Symposium held by the Tailhook Association opened in Las Vegas; during the four-day gathering, there were reports that dozens of people, most of them women, were sexually assaulted or otherwise harassed. (The episode triggered the resignation of Navy Secretary H. Lawrence Garrett and the early retirement of Adm. Frank B. Kelso, then the chief of naval operations.)

In 1997, breaking the royal reticence over the death of Princess Diana, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II delivered a televised address in which she called her former daughter-in-law "a remarkable person." Mother Teresa died in Calcutta, India, at age 87; conductor Sir Georg Solti (johrj SHOL'-tee) died in France at age 84.

In 2006, Katie Couric began a five-year run as principal anchor of "The CBS Evening News."

In 2018, The New York Times published an opinion piece from an anonymous senior administration official claiming to be part of an internal "resistance" working to thwart President Donald Trump's "worst inclinations;" Trump responded that if such a "gutless" person exists, "the Times must, for National Security purposes, turn him/her over to the government at once!"

In 2019, the NFL opened its 100th season in Chicago, where the Green Bay Packers beat the Chicago Bears 10-3 in the season's first game.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama used a boisterous Labor Day rally in Detroit to put congressional Republicans on the spot, challenging them to place the country's interests above all else and vote to create jobs and put the economy back on a path toward growth.

Five years ago: Chinese President Xi Jinping (shee jihn-peeng) announced the close of the G-20 summit

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in the eastern city of Hangzhou, saying it had contributed to encouraging new progress in boosting global growth. Hugh O'Brian, the actor who shot to fame as Sheriff Wyatt Earp in what was hailed as television's first adult Western, died in Beverly Hills, California, at age 91. Phyllis Schlafly, the outspoken conservative activist who helped defeat the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s and founded the Eagle Forum political group, died in St. Louis at age 92.

One year ago: New wildfires in Southern California included one caused by a smoke-generating pyrotechnic device used during a gender-reveal party. Hundreds of people gathered for Black Lives Matter rallies and marches in Portland, Oregon, as often violent nightly demonstrations that had taken place for 100 days showed no signs of ceasing; Molotov cocktails were thrown in the street during a march, sparking a large fire and prompting police to declare a riot. Authentic led all the way to win a Kentucky Derby held in front of an empty grandstand and in September rather than May because of the coronavirus; it was a record-tying sixth Derby victory for trainer Bob Baffert.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian-actor Bob Newhart is 92. Actor-singer Carol Lawrence is 89. Actor Lucille Soong is 86. Former NFL All-Pro quarterback and college football Hall of Famer Billy Kilmer is 82. Actor William Devane is 82. Actor George Lazenby is 82. Actor Raquel Welch is 81. Movie director Werner Herzog is 79. Singer Al Stewart is 76. Actor-director Dennis Dugan is 75. College Football Hall of Famer Jerry LeVias is 75. Singer Loudon Wainwright III is 75. Soul/rock musician Mel Collins is 74. "Cathy" cartoonist Cathy Guisewite (GYZ'-wyt) is 71. Actor Michael Keaton is 70. Actor Debbie Turner-Larson (Marta in "The Sound of Music") is 65. Actor Kristian Alfonso is 58. R&B singer Terry Ellis is 58. Rock musician Brad Wilk is 53. TV personality Dweezil Zappa is 52. Actor Rose McGowan is 48. Actor Carice Van Houten is 45. Rock musician Kyle O'Quin (Portugal. The Man) is 36. Olympic gold medal figure skater Yuna Kim is 31. Actor Skandar Keynes is 30.