

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 1 of 78

## 1- Upcoming Events

### 1- Help Wanted

1- Dialing Area Code requirement is soon

2- Band Festival is Today

3- Obit: Lois Pasch

4- Groton Area Covid-19 Report

5- School Board Agenda

6- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

7- Weather Pages

11- Daily Devotional

12- 2021 Community Events

13- News from the Associated Press

## Upcoming Events

### Friday, Oct. 8 - NO SCHOOL

8 a.m. to Noon: Parent/Teacher Conferences

10 a.m.: Lake Region Marching Festival in Groton

Noon to 3:30 p.m.: Faculty Inservice

### Saturday, Oct. 9

Soccer Second Round Playoffs

Volleyball at Redfield Tourney

Pumpkin Fest in Groton

### Monday, Oct. 11

No School - Native American Day

### Tuesday, Oct. 12

12:43 p.m. to 2:43 p.m.: PSAT Pre-Administration

Volleyball at Tiospa Zina (7th/C match at 5 p.m.,

8th/JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow)

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

### Wednesday, Oct. 13

Elementary School LifeTouch Pictures, 8-11 a.m.

PSAT Testing for sophomores and juniors during first hour

### Thursday, Oct. 14

High School LifeTouch Pictures, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

3:30 p.m.: Region 1A cross Country Meet in Webster

ster

4:00 p.m.: Junior High Football Jamboree in Groton

Volleyball hosts Milbank (7th/C match at 6:55 p.m.,

8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow)

### Friday, Oct. 15

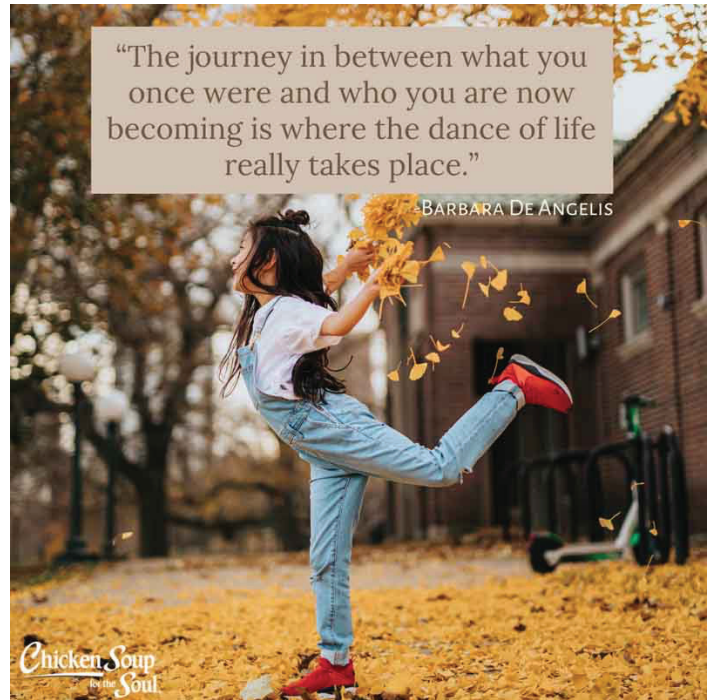
7 p.m.: Football at Sisseton

### Saturday, Oct. 16

Oral Interp at Florence

State Soccer in Sioux Falls

JV Volleyball Tourney in Milbank



**Starting 10/24/21, you must dial the area code for all calls. This change supports 988 as the new 3-digit code to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.**

## Help Wanted

Applications will be accepted for skating rink manager and attendants for the City of Groton. Contact City Hall 397-8422 for an application or print one online at <http://city.grotonsd.gov/>. EOE.

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

© 2021 Groton Daily Independent

## Lake Region Marching Band Festival is Today in Groton

On Friday, October 8th twelve area school bands and the Aberdeen Central High School Golden Eagle Marching Band will converge in Groton for the annual Lake Region Marching Band Festival. The parade of bands will travel from South to North on Groton's Main Street from Railroad Avenue to 9th Avenue, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Following the parade, the Aberdeen Central High School Band will present a "Phantom of the Opera" field marching show for all bands in attendance.

This festival originated in Milbank, moved to Waubay for 11 years, and has been held in Groton for the past 9 years. Each band will be evaluated on their performance by a panel of judges from Aberdeen Central High School. Awards will be given to the top two high school and top two middle school bands. Awards will be given to the top three bands in the combined band division. Other awards that will be given out are Best Percussion, Best Winds, and Best Color Guard. An overall Top Band Award will be given to the band with the overall highest score.

The festival has become a premier marching event in Northeast South Dakota, attracting bands and spectators from towns across the region. The public is invited to watch the parade of bands on Main Street as well as Aberdeen Central's field marching show and awards at the football field. The festival will be livestreamed at [gdilive.com](http://gdilive.com) free of charge. Concessions will be available at the football field following the parade.

Attending the festival are bands from Aberdeen Roncalli, Warner, Leola, Langford, Milbank MS, Ipswich, Castlewood, Wilmot, Frederick, Sully Buttes, Groton, Aberdeen Simmons and Holgate MS, and Northwestern.

Primary sponsors of the festival are Groton Dairy Queen and the Groton Daily Independent.

## 2021 Lake Region Marching Festival Lineup and Schedule

- 10:00- Groton Area High School Marching Band
- 10:05- Groton Area Junior High Marching Band
- 10:10- Simmons Holgate Middle School
- 10:15- Milbank Middle School
- 10:20- Northwestern
- 10:25- Castlewood
- 10:30- Warner
- 10:35- Leola
- 10:40- Roncalli
- 10:45- Wilmot
- 10:50- Ipswich
- 10:55- Frederick
- 11:00- Langford
- 11:05- Sully Buttes
- 11:15- Aberdeen Central
- BANDS PROCEED TO FOOTBALL FIELD
- 11:50- "Phantom of the Opera" field performance by Aberdeen Central
- 12:05- Awards

The event will be  
Livestreamed for  
free at  
**GDILIVE.COM**

## The Life of Lois Pasch

Graveside services for Lois Pasch, 97, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Saturday, October 9th at Union Cemetery, Groton. Rev. Larry Johnson will officiate. Arrangements are under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Lois passed away October 5, 2021 at Wheatcrest Hills in Britton.

Lois Jane Hoops was born on October 14, 1923 to William and Louise (Reber) Hoops on the family farm in West Hanson Township. She attended school in West Hanson and later worked for several neighbors. Lois was later employed at the Gamble's Store and Blue Bird Cafe. On December 11, 1946 she was united in marriage with Walter Pasch on the farm. In 1957, the family purchased a farm nearby where they raised their family. Lois and Wally were blessed with four boys, but tragically lost their first born son Billy in Vietnam, making Lois a Gold Star Mother. Their third boy, Alroy "Porky" died at an early age from a heart attack. Through these hardships, Lois always kept her faith.



Lois was baptized and confirmed in West Hanson and later began attending St. John's Lutheran in Groton. She was active in Ladies Aid, Good Cheer Circle and in their quilting circle. Lois also belonged to the Brown County 4-H Club, American Legion Auxiliary, and was Chairman of the James Jimmy's Baseball Team. In her free time, she enjoyed crocheting, quilting, gardening and tending to her yard.

Celebrating her life are her two sons, Robert Pasch (Anita Rieprich) of Webster, Donald Pasch of Watertown, six grandchildren: Ron (Amy) Pasch, Tamora German, Tanya Groft, Becky (Brook) Stephens, RaeLynn (Lonnie) Geiman and Roberta Elkins, 16 great-grandchildren and 16 great-great-grandchildren.

Preceding her in death were her parents, two sons, William "Billy" Pasch, Alroy "Porky" Pasch, her husband, Walter and three siblings, Fritz Hoops, Wallace Hoops and Dorothy Martin.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 4 of 78

Groton Area School District  
Active COVID-19 Cases  
Updated October 7, 2021; 7:26 AM

J K	K G	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1 0	1 1	1 2	S t a t i s t i c s	T o t a l
0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8

The case data presented above includes positive cases resulting from at-home testing. The Department of Health does not include those cases in their official counts and we recommend anyone receiving a positive at-home test to consult with their health care provider for follow-up testing.

A positive case is considered active for a minimum of ten days after onset of symptoms. It is important to note that not all reported cases have been in school or school activities during their infectious periods (48 hours prior to onset of symptoms).

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 5 of 78

## GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

### School Board Meeting

October 12, 2021 – 7:00 PM – Via Zoom

#### AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

#### POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of minutes of September 13 and September 27 school board meetings as drafted or amended.
2. Approval of September Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments.
3. Approval of September 2021 School Lunch Report.
4. Approval of September 2021 School Transportation Report.

#### OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Continued discussion and necessary action on District response to COVID-19.
  - a. Local COVID-19 Update

#### ADJOURN

Topic: October School Board Meeting

Time: Oct 12, 2021 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://sdk12.zoom.us/j/93597618564?pwd=UmkrN1hkaWxDWWdTRS9PMjFWQW9jdz09>

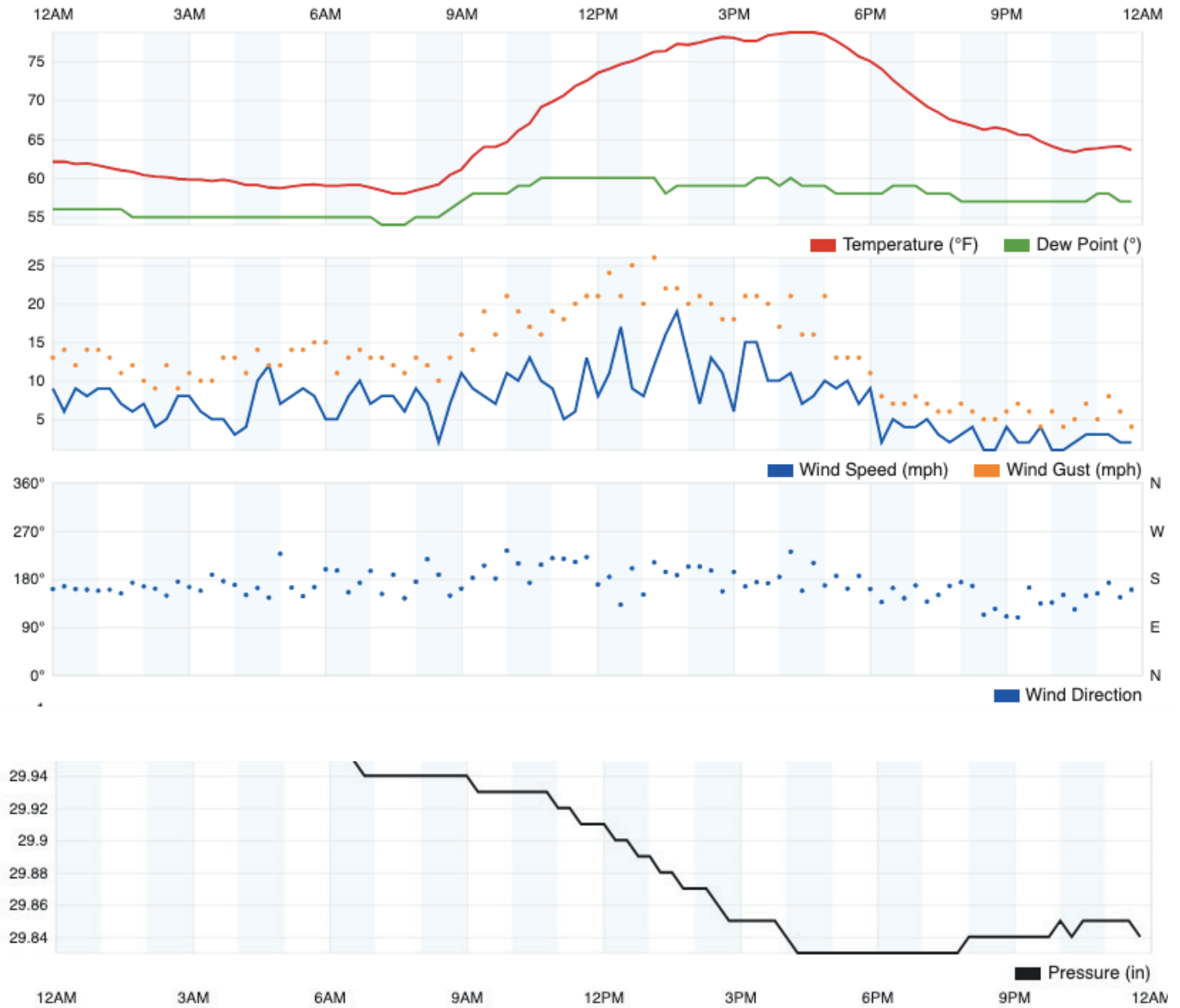
Meeting ID: 935 9761 8564

Passcode: 132536

# Groton Daily Independent



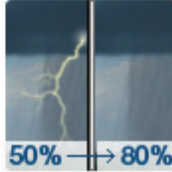
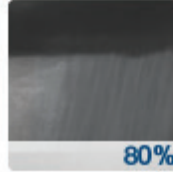

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 6 of 78


## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





# Groton Daily Independent


Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 7 of 78

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Showers	Showers	Chance Showers and Breezy
High: 82 °F	Low: 57 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 51 °F	High: 63 °F

**Today**  
*Slight chance of showers, mild*  
Highs 70-84° 

**Saturday**  
*Scattered showers and thunderstorms, severe possible toward evening Northeast SD/WC MN*  
Highs 63-79° 

**Sunday**  
*Lingering showers, cooler*  
Highs 58-70° 

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

ISSUED: 4:00 AM - Friday, October 8, 2021

A few showers are possible today, but more coverage of rain and even a few thunderstorms are expected over the weekend. A couple severe storms are possible Saturday late afternoon and evening over northeast South Dakota, and west central Minnesota. #sdwx #mnwx



## Severe Storms Possible Saturday

October 8, 2021  
4:12 AM

### Overview

A few severe storms are possible Saturday afternoon and evening for NE SD and WC MN

### Actions



Be weather aware and ready to act.  
Have multiple ways to receive warning information!

Severe Threats



Tornado



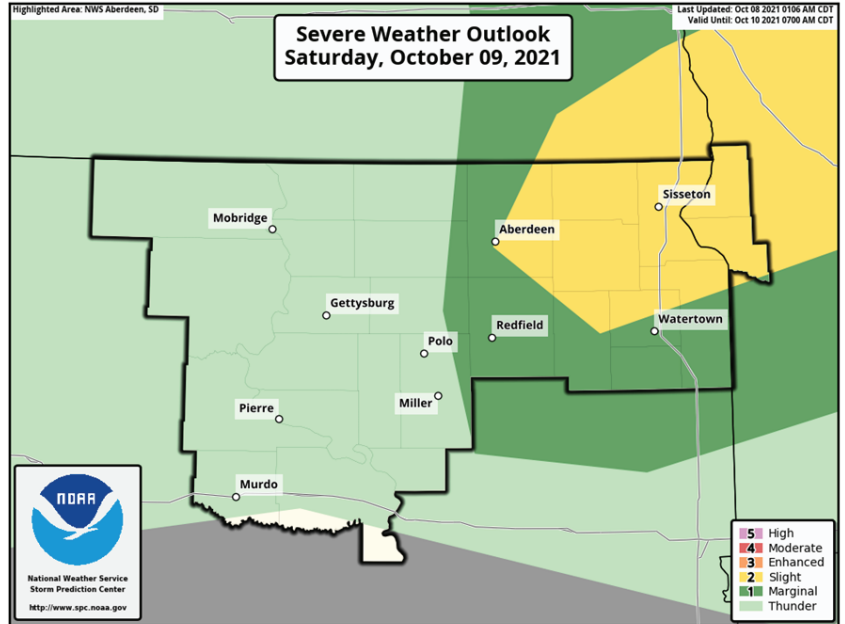
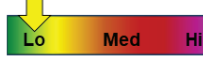
Hail



Wind



Flooding



A few severe storms are possible over northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota Saturday afternoon/evening. Hail and wind are the main threats. #sdwx #mnwx



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 9 of 78

## Today in Weather History

October 8, 1982: October 8th and 9th, 1982, a record-breaking snowstorm (at that time) for so early in the Fall paralyzed the northern Black Hills with three to six feet of heavy, wet snow and 40 to 70 miles an hour. Some snowfall amounts included 41 inches at Galena, 36 inches at Lead, and 23 inches at Deadwood. Five to six feet of snow was typical in the higher elevations. The heavy wet snow caused numerous problems. The roof of a clothing store in Lead collapsed under the snow's weight, and several other businesses were damaged.

The roofs of at least three trailer homes also collapsed. The combination of high winds and heavy snow broke tree branches (causing extensive timber damage), power lines, and telephone poles. The damage was done to 40 miles of power lines, including 30 broken power poles. Some residents were without power for five days. The city of Deadwood was without electricity and water for at least three days

1871: The Great Chicago Fire burns much of the city to the ground, fanned by strong southwest winds. An estimated 250 were killed. On the same night, forest fires swept through Peshtigo, Wisconsin. An estimated 1,500 to possibly as many as 2,500 dies as gale-force winds push flames across town. Severe drought blamed for tinder-dry conditions.

1871 - Prolonged drought and desiccating winds led to the great Chicago fire, the Peshtigo horror, and the Michigan fire holocaust. Fire destroyed more than seventeen thousand buildings killing more than 200 persons in the city of Chicago, while a fire consumed the town of Peshtigo WI killing more than 1100 persons. In Wisconsin, a million acres of land were burned, and in Michigan, 2.5 million acres were burned killing 200 persons. "Tornadoes of fire" generated by intense heat caused houses to explode in fire, and burned to death scores of persons seeking refuge in open fields. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1878: An estimated F3 tornado struck Monticello, Iowa, around 5:30 pm. The Catholic Church was demolished, along with several homes. The business portion of the town was comparatively uninjured. While no lives were lost, 11 people were injured. The German Church in Richland township was destroyed, along with other buildings in the surrounding county. A wind and hail storm occurred during the evening hours in Sigourney, Iowa, causing considerable damage. Fences and shade trees were blown down, and much glass was broken by hail, which fell in large stones.

1901 - A deluge at Galveston, TX, produced nearly twelve inches of rain in about a six hour period. The rains came precisely thirteen months after the day of the famous Galveston hurricane disaster. (David Ludlum)

1919: An intense tornado moved through the town of Hoisington, 11 miles north of Great Bend, Kansas. It damaged or destroyed 60 homes which resulted in \$200,000 in damages. Business papers and canceled checks were found at Lincoln, 55 miles to the northeast.

1946: A minimal Category 1 hurricane made landfall over Bradenton, Florida, before tracking north-northeast across Tampa Bay. The storm was the last hurricane to make direct landfall in the Tampa Bay area.

1982 - An unusually early snowstorm hit the northern Black Hills of Wyoming and South Dakota. The storm produced up to 54 inches of snow, and winds as high as 70 mph. The snowfall was very much dependent upon topography. Rapid City, 20 miles away, received just a trace of snow. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Upper Mississippi Valley to the southeastern U.S. Thirty cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Madison WI with a reading of 22 degrees. The low of 28 degrees at Evansville IN was the coolest of record for so early in the season. Hot weather continued in the southwestern U.S. Phoenix AZ reported a record high of 104 degrees and a record tying 116 days of 100 degree weather for the year. Tucson AZ established an all-time record with 72 days of 100 degree weather for the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Snow was reported across parts of northern New England. Two inches blanketed Mount Snow VT. Warm weather continued in the northwestern U.S. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Stampede Pass WA exceeded their previous record for October by seven degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

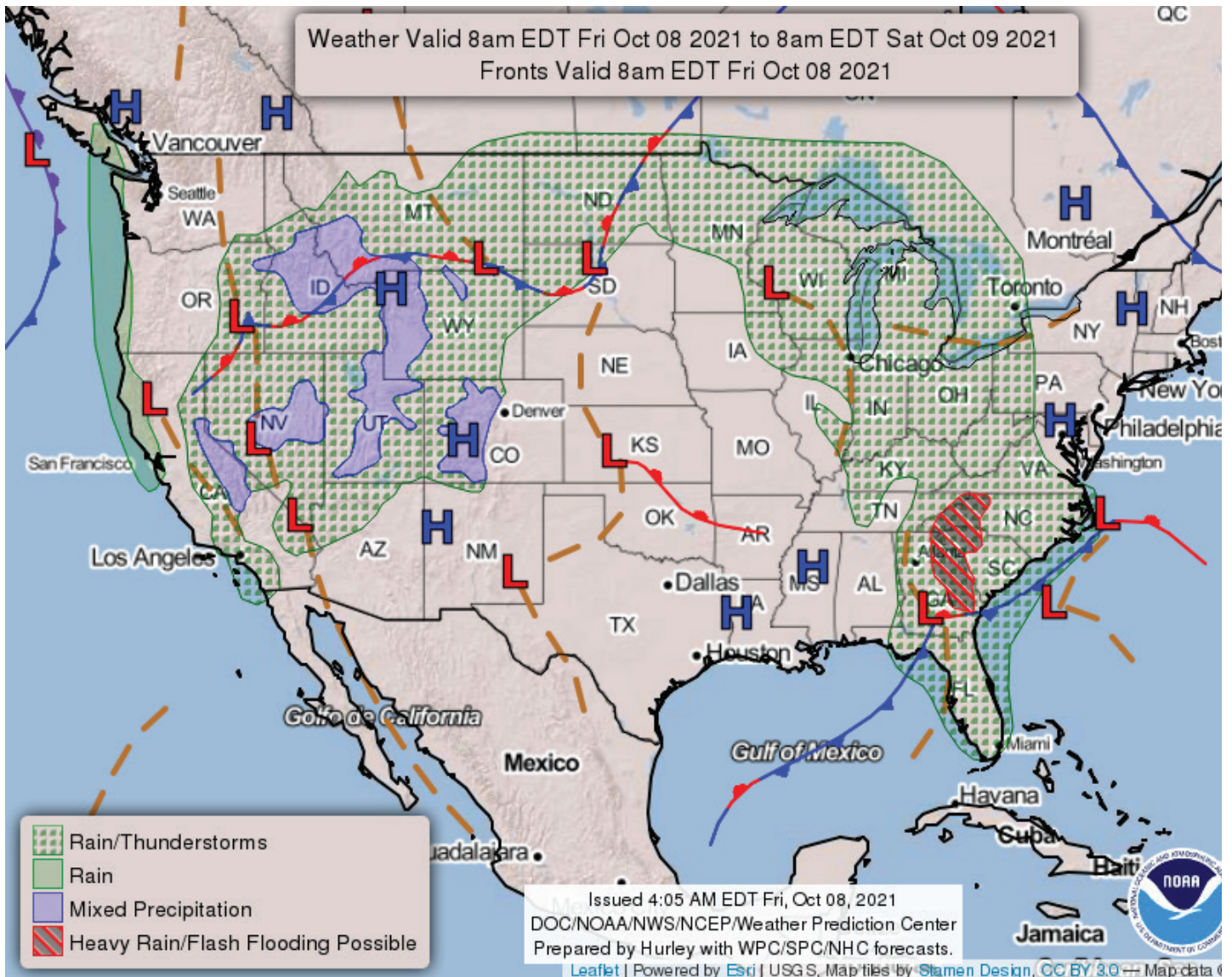
# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 10 of 78

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 78.7 °F at 4:30 PM**  
**Low Temp: 58.0 °F at 7:45 AM**  
**Wind: 26 mph at 1:15 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

**Record High: 87° in 1936**  
**Record Low: 9° in 1895**  
**Average High: 64°F**  
**Average Low: 37°F**  
**Average Precip in Oct.: 0.61**  
**Precip to date in Oct.: 0.28**  
**Average Precip to date: 18.94**  
**Precip Year to Date: 15.70**  
**Sunset Tonight: 7:00:52 PM**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:40:00 AM**



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 11 of 78



## ARE YOU THERE, GOD?

It was time for her prayers before jumping into bed. Little Susie began her prayer by thanking God for all His blessings that day. She did good on her tests, and her best friend came to visit her after school. So, she spent a special time thanking Him for all the good things He did for her that day. But when it was time for her to conclude her prayer, she said, "Good night, Dear Jesus, wherever You are. We're moving to New York in the morning. It's been nice talking to You. Amen." To her, Jesus could only hear her prayers if she was in the right place at the right time.

There are times when each of us feels that God is not paying attention to us when we pray. It seems as though the doors of heaven are locked tight, and God is too busy to hear us. Or maybe we've moved away from Him, and He no longer cares about us or our needs. Even the writer of Psalm 102:1 felt that way when he wrote: "Hear my prayer, O Lord, let my cry for help come to You."

This was no ordinary prayer. He was desperate and begged God for His attention. He sensed a distance between himself and God, was in a crisis and could not endure this sense of alienation. But he did not stop and give up but continued by saying, "Do not hide from me - answer me quickly!" I need Your help this very moment, God!

Perhaps a lesson we can learn from this prayer is that in His silence God is trying to get our attention. And sometimes, when we are intense and anxious, we become more alert to what He is doing. We must always remember that God is at work and when He is silent, He may be encouraging us to look more intently at the small things.

Prayer: Grant us patience, Father, as we wait before You, knowing that You are doing things we may not see. Open our eyes to see Your miracles. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Hear my prayer, O Lord, let my cry for help come to You. Psalm 102:1

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 12 of 78

## 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 13 of 78

News from the  Associated Press

## Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press undefined  
PREP FOOTBALL=  
Burke 61, Corsica/Stickney 18  
DeSmet 60, Castlewood 7

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

Information from: ScoreStream Inc., <http://ScoreStream.com>

## Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press undefined  
PREP VOLLEYBALL=  
Aberdeen Christian def. Wilmot, 25-11, 25-21, 25-7  
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-23, 25-8, 18-25, 25-21  
Arlington def. Lake Preston, 25-3, 25-12, 25-16  
Beresford def. Alcester-Hudson, 22-25, 25-17, 25-10  
Bison def. McLaughlin, 25-6, 25-18, 25-11  
Bridgewater-Emery def. Avon, 25-13, 25-12, 25-8  
Burke def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-23, 25-12, 13-25, 16-25, 15-12  
Dakota Valley def. Madison, 17-25, 25-20, 25-22, 25-19  
Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Estelline/Hendricks, 22-25, 25-22, 23-25, 25-23, 16-14  
Deuel def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-23, 25-13, 25-20  
Edgemont def. Sioux County, Neb., 25-5, 25-13, 19-25, 25-20  
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Tri-Valley, 25-22, 21-25, 25-22, 25-15  
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Deubrook, 25-23, 25-20, 22-25, 25-16  
Florence/Henry def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-13, 25-18, 25-14  
Garretson def. Canton, 25-5, 25-19, 25-15  
Gayville-Volin def. Menno, 25-17, 25-21, 25-16  
Great Plains Lutheran def. Langford, 25-14, 25-21, 25-21  
Highmore-Harrold def. Wessington Springs, 25-12, 17-25, 25-13  
Howard def. Canistota, 25-19, 25-22, 26-24  
Kimball/White Lake def. Parkston  
Lemmon def. New Underwood, 25-14, 25-21, 26-24  
Little Wound def. St. Francis Indian, 25-19, 18-25, 25-13, 25-15  
Milbank def. Britton-Hecla, 25-22, 25-14, 25-15  
Miller def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-20, 25-20, 25-20  
Northwestern def. Faulkton, 20-25, 25-18, 21-25, 25-20, 15-11  
Pierre def. Huron, 25-20, 25-19, 25-23  
Pine Ridge def. Bennett County, 28-26, 21-25, 25-5, 25-13  
Platte-Geddes def. Gregory, 25-8, 25-15, 26-24  
Redfield def. Hamlin, 25-19, 25-22, 25-21  
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-14, 25-21, 25-20  
Scotland def. Centerville, 25-14, 25-16, 25-17  
Sioux Falls Christian def. Southwest Minnesota Christian, Minn., 25-7, 25-18, 25-20  
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Mitchell, 25-21, 25-17, 25-19

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 14 of 78

St. Thomas More def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-8, 25-16, 25-12  
Stanley County def. Colome, 25-15, 23-25, 25-18, 25-19  
Viborg-Hurley def. Sioux Falls Lutheran, 25-21, 25-17, 25-14  
Wall def. Custer, 25-17, 18-25, 19-25, 25-20, 15-13  
Hay Springs Triangular=  
Lakota Tech def. Hay Springs, Neb., 25-17, 23-25, 25-18  
Lakota Tech def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-17, 25-16

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

Information from: ScoreStream Inc., <http://ScoreStream.com>

## **The Pandora Papers: why does South Dakota feature so heavily?**

Beverly Moran Vanderbilt University

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Beverly Moran, Vanderbilt University

(THE CONVERSATION) A trove of confidential documents outlining how global elites squirrel away their wealth to avoid tax has been laid bare in the "Pandora Papers."

Consisting of around 12 million documents, the data was obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank that worked with media organizations around the world to publish details of the leaked information.

As well as giving an insight into the wealth of world leaders, former presidents and prime ministers, the Pandora Papers reveal how tax havens – including in the the U.S. – are used to hide money from tax authorities. Taxation expert Beverly Moran of Vanderbilt University walked The Conversation through three takeaways from the leaked documents.

How the super-rich use tax loopholes

The Pandora Papers come five years after a similar leak of documents called the "Panama Papers." Those documents showed how many of the world's wealthiest people routinely avoided any type of tax by placing their assets in tax havens – nations or jurisdictions with low tax rates.

In response to the Panama Papers, many countries took measures that made some of the techniques exposed in the Panama Papers obsolete. For example, after decades of offering rich people the greatest bank secrecy in the Western world, the Swiss forced their banks to open their books. The latest release also comes amid scrutiny over how little tax some wealthy individuals pay. The intergovernmental Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development recently pushed for a corporate minimum tax of 15% as another way to attack the tax haven problem.

The Pandora Papers reveal the tactics wealthy people developed to replace the no longer secret means they used in the past. In particular, the Pandora Papers shine a light on the role of shell companies in making it harder to tax high-net-worth individuals. Included in the leak are documents revealing aspects of the finances of hundreds of politicians from 90 countries.

The role of shell companies

A shell company is a legal entity that exists only on paper. It produces nothing and employs no one. Its value lies in a certificate that sits in a government office.

With this certificate, the shell company – whose sole purpose is to hold and hide assets – becomes one of a series of Russian dolls, each fit snugly into the next, creating a type of three-card monte in which the taxing authorities can never find assets nor owners. With a series of shell companies, a billionaire can house his or her assets far from the taxman's prying eyes.

For the billionaire to avoid the tax, the shell company must reside, for tax purposes, in a tax haven. In the past, that has meant a bank account in the Cayman Islands or Monaco. But as the Pandora Papers

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 15 of 78

show, increasingly it could mean using a tax haven in the United States.

South Dakota as a tax haven

South Dakota is mentioned throughout the Pandora Papers because many wealthy people use the state as a tax haven. Indeed, of the 206 U.S.-based trusts identified in the Pandora Papers – which combined hold assets worth more than US\$1 billion – 81 are based on South Dakota.

South Dakota is a particularly good tax haven for a number of reasons. For one thing, it has strong secrecy protections thanks to its trust laws, which makes it easy to hide the true ownership of property. Trusts are said to offer some of the most powerful legal protections in the world.

According to the Pandora Papers, trust-friendly legislation in South Dakota has resulted in assets in trusts growing fourfold in the state over the past decade to \$360 billion.

But South Dakota also benefits from the same things all U.S. states have: comparatively strong rule of law, a stable currency and good infrastructure – especially when compared with other known tax havens outside of Europe. A wealthy person can easily fly to the United States, purchase property in the U.S., put assets in American banks and feel secure knowing that his or her contracts will be respected and protected by a stable and transparent legal system.

This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article here: <https://theconversation.com/the-pandora-papers-why-does-south-dakota-feature-so-heavily-169291>.

## South Dakota Water Board won't take up uranium mine permits

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Water Board has rejected a request by a Canadian company that wants to restart the permitting process for a proposed uranium mine in the southern Black Hills.

The board on Wednesday unanimously rejected Powertech Inc.'s request following opposition from dozens of citizens, intervenors and state officials. Board members say it would be a waste of time and money because the company is still seeking some federal permits while others are tied up in the courts.

"I just don't think it's appropriate for the state of South Dakota and this board to spend millions of dollars once again on an issue and then have the rug pulled out from under our feet after we've made a decision," board member Rodney Freeman said.

The board puts its consideration of another Powertech project on hold in 2013, just a year after the company began the permitting process. Powertech has been pursuing federal permits and licenses since then, South Dakota Public Broadcasting reported.

Powertech, a subsidiary of Azarga Uranium, which is based in British Columbia, hopes to open a mine near Edgemont in Custer and Fall River counties. It plans to use a well-drilling method that injects a water-based solution underground, dissolves the uranium and draws it to the surface for processing.

Matthew Naasz, a Rapid City-based attorney representing Powertech, was the only person who spoke in favor of restarting the permitting process.

"Powertech has rights, too. Powertech has the rights to have its applications heard on the merits," he said. "There's no legal impediment to moving this matter forward, no reason these matters can't go forward in parallel."

Intervenors and people who spoke during public comment focused on the pending federal permits but other concerns as well. The speakers included people who live near the proposed mine, environmental activists, the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and tribal members.

"We've had uranium mining in our county before," said Randy Luallin, of Hot Springs. "It was a boondoggle, the taxpayers ended up cleaning up the mess, and here we are again."

Uranium was mined in open pits and tunnels in the Edgemont area from the 1950s to the 1970s, a process that left behind unreclaimed mines, buried radioactive waste and health concerns. Powertech says nuclear energy is environmentally friendly since it's carbon-free.

**EXPLAINER: The Texas abortion law's swift impact, and future**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 16 of 78

By PAUL J. WEBER and JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A federal judge on Wednesday ordered Texas to suspend a new law banning most abortions, which had already put a strain on clinics and patients in the month since it took effect.

U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman, an appointee of President Barack Obama, granted the Biden administration a temporary hold on the law.

But that doesn't mean abortion services in Texas will instantly resume, because doctors still fear that they could be sued without a more permanent legal decision.

In the wording of the new law, abortions in Texas are prohibited once medical professionals can detect cardiac activity, usually around six weeks and before some women know they're pregnant. Enforcement is left up to private citizens who are deputized to file civil lawsuits against abortion providers, as well as others who help a woman obtain an abortion in Texas.

Supporters of the law known as Senate Bill 8 were preparing for a ruling that favors the Justice Department's challenge but believe the measure — the strictest abortion law in the nation — will ultimately be upheld. Texas officials swiftly told the court Wednesday of their intention to seek a reversal.

Here are some questions and answers about what's next and the impact so far:

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT?

Abortion providers say the ramifications have been punishing and "exactly what we feared."

More than 100 pages of court filings in September offered the most comprehensive glimpse at how the near-total ban on abortion in Texas has played out. Physicians and executives at Texas' nearly two dozen abortion clinics described turning away hundreds of patients, and some who showed up for appointments could not proceed because cardiac activity had been detected.

One Planned Parenthood location in Houston normally performed about two dozen abortions daily, but in the 10 days after the law took effect, the clinic had done a total of 52. Clinics in nearby states, meanwhile, say they are struggling to meet surging demand and care for their own residents is being delayed to accommodate women making long trips from Texas.

At a Planned Parenthood clinic in Oklahoma City, at one point more than 60% of the 219 appointments over the following next two weeks were for women from Texas. Doctors say recent patients from Texas have included rape victims, as SB8 makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest.

Most Texas abortion providers say they are complying with SB8. One San Antonio doctor who became the first to publicly reveal he performed an abortion in defiance of the new law, was sued Sept. 20, but not by abortion opponents. Former attorneys in Illinois and Arkansas say they sued the doctor in hopes of getting a judge to invalidate the law.

## WHAT WAS THE LANDSCAPE IN TEXAS BEFORE?

More than 55,000 abortions were performed last year in Texas, which already had some of the nation's strictest abortion laws, including a ban after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

## SINCE THE JUDGE SIDED WITH CLINICS, HOW SOON COULD THEY REOPEN?

It could be done quickly, abortion providers say, but how soon is likely to depend on several factors.

Abortion providers in Texas have experience when it comes to abruptly ramping up operations again. In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, abortions in Texas were all but banned for weeks under orders by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott that postponed surgeries "not immediately medically necessary."

But providers were reporting staffing issues and worried some clinics would permanently shutter. A decade ago, Texas had more than 40 abortion clinics, but more than half of them closed for good during a protracted legal battle over a 2013 law that was ultimately overturned by the Supreme Court.

Amy Hagstrom Miller, president of Whole Woman's Health, said some of the 17 physicians at her four clinics were ready to resume normal abortion services if the law was put on hold. Preparations began last week when some doctors gave patients found to have cardiac activity information to comply with another



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 17 of 78

restriction — requiring a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion — so that they would be ready to be called back.

But the majority of her physicians, Hagstrom Miller said, remain wary and fear lawsuits absent a permanent court ruling. Clinic staff are also worried. “Of course, we understand that,” she said.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Biden administration filed its lawsuit in early September and then asked for the temporary restraining order to put SB8 on hold while the lawsuit proceeds.

Texas Right to Life, the state’s largest anti-abortion group and a driver of the new law, has cheered the fact that it has stopped abortions every day that it has been in effect.

Pitman’s ruling to grant a temporary hold doesn’t decide the constitutionality of the law, though whether the administration’s lawsuit — which calls it “clearly unconstitutional” — was likely to succeed is a factor in putting the law on hold.

Texas could quickly file paperwork officially asking the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reinstate the law. That New Orleans-based appeals court, which oversees Texas, is a conservative-leaning panel with a track record of staying lower-court rulings from Austin.

The law has already made one trip to the Supreme Court. The justices voted 5-4 not to intervene to prevent it from taking effect, but they said further challenges were possible. With the Biden administration’s challenge underway, the law could return to the justices quickly.

## HOW ARE OTHER STATES RESPONDING?

After Texas’ law went into effect Republican lawmakers in at least half a dozen states said they would consider introducing bills using the Texas law as a model, hoping it provides a pathway to enacting the kind of abortion crackdown they have sought for years. Those states include Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Meanwhile, two dozen state attorneys general, all Democrats, submitted a brief in the Biden administration’s lawsuit saying a substantial reduction of abortion access in one state would result in health care systems being burdened elsewhere. They asked Pitman to block enforcement of the law.

The City Council in Portland, Oregon, briefly considered a boycott of Texas businesses because of the new law but instead decided to set aside \$200,000 to fund reproductive care.

The growing anti-abortion campaign is intended to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Abortion opponents hope the conservative coalition assembled under President Donald Trump will end the constitutional right to abortion as established by the high court in the landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that established the constitutional right to abortion, there have been legal efforts to chip away at and ultimately overturn the decision. Abortion opponents hope the conservative coalition assembled at the Supreme Court under former President Donald Trump will make that happen.

Gresko reported from Washington.

## Mechanical failure touched off fire north of Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A mechanical failure caused the fire that has burned about 1.5 square miles northwest of Rapid City, according to state and local officials.

South Dakota Wildland Fire and the Rapid City Fire and Police departments tweeted the fire was accidentally ignited by a mechanical failure of some earth-moving equipment, the Rapid City Journal reported.

“This was not a human-caused fire,” the tweet stated.

The so-called Auburn Fire is 50% contained, according to fire officials. Residents of the Marvel Mountain area were temporarily evacuated after the fire, which started Monday, began to spread. The neighborhood remains closed to the general public.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 18 of 78

Incident Commander Rob Powell with South Dakota Wildland Fire says the strong wind, high temperatures and shortage of resources have been a struggle for firefighters. Wildfires in California have been exhausting resources elsewhere, he said.

There have been no serious injuries and no structures have burned, officials said.

Rapid City Fire Department, volunteer departments from across Pennington and Meade counties, Ellsworth Air Force Base fire crews, South Dakota Wildland Fire, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Forest Service are all fighting the Auburn Fire.

## Teen found guilty of murder in fatal Rapid City shooting

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A teenager accused in a fatal shooting in Rapid City more than three years ago has been found guilty of second-degree murder by a jury in Pennington County.

Seventeen-year-old Ronald Black Cloud, who was 14 when the shooting occurred, was tried in adult court for the death of 43-year-old Nathan Graham.

During closing arguments Wednesday, Deputy State's Attorney Lara Roetzel told jurors that Black Cloud acted without regard for human life, noting that he and his friend, Ross Johnson, were trespassing on Graham's property the night of the shooting and were told to leave but didn't.

The two had went to Graham's house looking for Graham's stepson, despite Johnson knowing that he was not allowed at the home.

Roetzel also argued that neither Black Cloud's nor Johnson's safety was being threatened as Graham had been walking away from the two before he was shot by Black Cloud at Johnson's instruction, the Rapid City Journal reported.

A sentencing date for Black Cloud has not been set.

Johnson was sentenced to 20 years in prison in June after he pleaded guilty to aggravated assault and being an accessory to the second-degree murder of Graham.

## Journalists from Philippines, Russia win Nobel Peace Prize

By KIKO ROSARIO, FRANK JORDANS and VANESSA GERA Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Journalists Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Dmitry Muratov of Russia won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for their fight for freedom of expression in countries where media outlets have faced persistent attacks and reporters have been murdered.

In making the award, the Norwegian Nobel Committee stressed that an independent press is vital in promoting peace.

"Free, independent and fact-based journalism serves to protect against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda," said Berit Reiss-Andersen, chair of the committee, explaining why the prize was awarded to two journalists.

"Without freedom of expression and freedom of the press, it will be difficult to successfully promote fraternity between nations, disarmament and a better world order to succeed in our time," she said.

The Nobel committee noted that Ressa in 2012 co-founded Rappler, a news website that has focused critical attention on President Rodrigo Duterte "controversial, murderous anti-drug campaign" in the Philippines.

She and Rappler "have also documented how social media is being used to spread fake news, harass opponents and manipulate public discourse."

Reacting to the news, Ressa told Norway's TV2 channel that "the government will obviously not be happy."

"I'm a little shocked. It's really emotional," she added. "But I am happy on behalf of my team and would like to thank the Nobel Committee for recognizing what we are going through."

The award-winning journalist was convicted last year of libel and sentenced to jail in a decision seen as a major blow to press global freedom. She was the first woman awarded a Nobel this year.

Muratov was one of the founders in 1993 of the independent Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta, which the Nobel committee described as "the most independent newspaper in Russia today, with a fundamentally critical attitude towards power."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 19 of 78

"The newspaper's fact-based journalism and professional integrity have made it an important source of information on censurable aspects of Russian society rarely mentioned by other media," it added.

Muratov said he would use his win to help independent journalists who have faced a growing pressure from the authorities, including those who were officially declared "foreign agents" — a designation that carries pejorative connotations and implies additional government scrutiny.

"We will use it to shore up Russian journalism that has faced repressions," he said in comments carried by a Russian messaging app channel. "We will try to help the people who have been designated as agents, have faced persecution and have been forced out of the country."

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 17 media workers were killed in the Philippines in the last decade and 23 in Russia.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev used some of his prize money from winning the Nobel in 1990 to help what would become Novaya Gazeta buy office equipment and computers.

The Nobel committee noted that since the launch of the newspaper, six of its journalists have been killed, among them Anna Politkovskaya, who covered Russia's bloody conflict in Chechnya.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov praised Muratov as a "talented and brave" person.

"We can congratulate Dmitry Muratov — he has consistently worked in accordance with his ideals," Peskov said in a conference call with reporters.

Some critics questioned if the award respected Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel's will and its original purpose to prevent war. Dan Smith, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, was among those who said it was justified.

"Freedom of expression is a part of democracy, and democratic systems are proven to be more stable, less likely to go to war with each other, less likely to experience civil war," Smith told The Associated Press. "I think the important thing about a media that's truly free is that it not only acts independently, but it respects the truth. And that seems to me to be also an important part not just of democracy, but also of the work towards peace."

Reiss-Andersen noted that the peace prize has gone to journalists before, including Ernesto Teodoro Moneta of Italy, cited in 1907 "for his work in the press and in peace meetings."

In 1935, German journalist Carl von Ossietzky was awarded the prize "for his burning love for freedom of thought and expression" after revealing that the Nazi regime was secretly re-arming in breach of the World War I peace accord.

Ressa has been particularly critical also of the role of tech companies such as Facebook in manipulating public debate, and their failure to curb hate speech.

Speaking on Rappler's site after the award was announced, Ressa said that the "virus of lies that has been introduced through the algorithms of the social media platforms, it infects real people and changes."

Reiss-Andersen also noted the risks to free speech in today's world due to the spread of fake news.

"Conveying fake news and information that is propaganda and untrue is also a violation of freedom of expression, and all freedom of expression has its limitations. That is also a very important factor in this debate," she said.

Media rights group Reporters Without Borders celebrated the announcement, expressing "Joy and urgency" in reaction to the news.

"Joy because this is an extraordinary tribute to journalism, an excellent tribute to all journalists who take risks everywhere around the world to defend the right to information," the group's director Christophe Deloire said from its Paris headquarters. The group, known by its French acronym RSF, has worked with Ressa and Muratov to defend journalism in their countries, and comes under regular criticism from authoritarian governments.

"And also urgency because it will be a decisive decade for journalism. Journalism is in danger, journalism is weakened, journalism is threatened," Deloire said. "Democracies are weakened by disinformation, by rumors, by hate speech."

"This prize is a great signal a very powerful message to defend journalism everywhere."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 20 of 78

After the announcement, the Nobel committee itself was put on the spot by a reporter who asked about its decision to award the 2019 peace prize to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who has since become entangled in a domestic conflict with the powerful Tigray region.

"Today, I will not comment on other Nobel laureates and other issues than we have on the table today, but I can mention that the situation for freedom of press in Ethiopia is very far from ideal and is facing severe restrictions," Reiss-Andersen said.

The award is accompanied by a gold medal and 10 million Swedish kronor (over \$1.14 million). The prize money comes from a bequest from Nobel, who died in 1895.

On Monday, the Nobel Committee awarded the prize in physiology or medicine to Americans David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian for their discoveries into how the human body perceives temperature and touch.

The Nobel Prize in physics was awarded Tuesday to three scientists whose work found order in seeming disorder, helping to explain and predict complex forces of nature, including expanding our understanding of climate change.

Benjamin List and David W.C. MacMillan were named as laureates of the Nobel Prize for chemistry Wednesday for finding an easier and environmentally cleaner way to build molecules that can be used to make compounds, including medicines and pesticides.

The Nobel Prize for literature was awarded Thursday to U.K.-based Tanzanian writer Abdulrazak Gurnah, who was recognized for his "uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee."

Still to come Monday is the prize for outstanding work in the field economics.

---

Associated Press writers Frank Jordans in Berlin, Masha Macpherson in Paris, Vanessa Gera in Warsaw, Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Vladimir Isachenkov in Russia contributed to this report.

---

Read more stories about Nobel Prizes past and present by The Associated Press at <https://www.apnews.com/NobelPrizes>

## Former Australian PM Abbott calls for solidarity with Taiwan

By HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — A former Australian prime minister accused China of being a bully and expressed enthusiastic support for Taiwan while visiting the democratically ruled island on Friday.

"Nothing is more pressing right now than solidarity with Taiwan," former Prime Minister Tony Abbott said at a conference.

China's government has been seeking to isolate Taiwan, which it claims as its own territory. It has stepped up military harassment of the island by flying fighter jets toward Taiwan, with a particularly large number of flights this past week.

Abbott's comments were at a conference organized by a think tank backed by Taiwan's government. The Australian government has said his visit to Taiwan is unofficial.

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen launched the forum with a more restrained speech, omitting any direct mention of China.

She said "Taiwan is fully committed to collaborating with regional players to prevent armed conflict in the South China Sea and in the Taiwan Strait."

Abbott said that two years ago, he hesitated to attend the meeting, called the Yushan Forum, for fear of provoking Beijing.

China until recently was Australia's biggest export market for coal and other commodities.

Things have changed since then, he said, with Beijing tightening controls over Hong Kong and "weaponizing" trade against Australia.

Beijing has imposed official and unofficial trade barriers against Australian products including wine, coal and barley following Australia's call for an independent investigation into the origins of the coronavirus,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 21 of 78

essentially shutting down imports of these products.

Abbott said the Chinese Embassy in Australia had issued a list of demands that essentially ordered that “we become a tributary state.”

“Be a friend, and you’ll have friends, be a bully and you’ll only have clients who can’t wait to escape,” Abbott said.

He added, though, that “collaboration is still possible, and trust could yet be rebuilt.”

Abbott represented Australia this year as a special trade envoy for India. He angered Beijing in August when he described a potential Australia-India free trade agreement as a signal of the “democratic world’s tilt away China.”

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Thursday that Abbott had flown to Taiwan as a private citizen and took no message from the current government. However, the government granted him an exemption to a pandemic travel ban that keeps most Australians at home.

Abbott was also accompanied at engagements by Australia’s top diplomat in Taiwan, Jenny Bloomfield, the Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported.

He hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping’s state visit to Australia in 2014 and was the government leader when a free trade deal was finalized with China. The deal took effect in 2015 after Abbott was replaced by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who addressed the same Taiwan forum online last year.

Abbott said the most important thing is to ensure Taiwan’s self-determination. Chinese leaders have said they are determined to unite the island and the mainland, by force if necessary.

He praised Taiwan’s transition to democracy and its economic growth, and said Australia should not be “indifferent” if Taiwan were threatened.

Abbott’s trip coincides with a visit by a group of four French senators as part of a parliamentary exchange with the island, who also praised the island’s democracy and commented on the importance of stability in the region.

Alain Richard, the senator who led the visit, said France is committed to maintaining “stability, open communications, free navigation” in the Indo-Pacific region.

The senators’ visit faced Chinese pressure as well.

Asked about recent Chinese pressure and flights by fighter jets toward Taiwan, Richard said these were “messages of threats” that both Taiwan and the “powers committed to stability” in the region understood clearly.

Abbott called on other countries in the world to support Taiwan in the face of such threats.

“Our challenge is to try and ensure that the unthinkable remains unlikely and that the possible does not become the probable,” Abbott said.

“That’s why Taiwan’s friends are so important now, to stress that Taiwan’s future should be decided by its own people and to let Beijing know any attempt at coercion would have incalculable consequences.”

---

Associated Press videojournalist Taijing Wu contributed to this report.

## **EXPLAINER: How China flights near Taiwan inflame tensions**

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A recent spate of Chinese military flights off southwestern Taiwan has prompted alarm from the island, which Beijing claims as its own, and is increasing tensions in a region already on edge.

The flights are one piece of a complex puzzle in Asia, where the United States and its allies have stepped up their naval maneuvers and Australia announced last month it is acquiring nuclear-powered submarines in a deal seen as a direct challenge to Beijing. Meanwhile, Japan has grown increasingly vocal about China becoming a security threat.

Experts agree that armed conflict is not imminent, but as military activity increases, there are growing fears that a mishap or miscalculation could lead to an unintended escalation. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 22 of 78

Guterres urged Beijing and Washington last month to repair their "completely dysfunctional" relationship, saying "we need to avoid at all cost a Cold War."

Here are some of the issues at play:

## WHAT ARE CHINA'S GOALS?

China portrays its military profile as purely defensive, arranged to protect what it says are its sovereign rights from Taiwan to the South China Sea and its long, disputed mountain border with India. The U.S. and many of China's neighbors see that stance as aggressive and have bolstered their own presence in hopes of arresting China's efforts to unalterably change facts on the ground.

China, after years of rising military spending, now boasts the world's second largest defense budget behind the U.S., totaling about \$209 billion this year. That has allowed the development of advanced weapons systems including the J-20 stealth fighter, hypersonic missiles and two aircraft carriers, with a third under construction.

President Xi Jinping, also commander of the People's Liberation Army, has overseen the construction of military facilities on man-made islands in the South China Sea meant to extend China's territorial waters, and stated that bringing Taiwan under Beijing's control cannot be left to the next generation. His threats toward the self-governing island democracy have been amplified through military exercises along the coast opposite Taiwan and the flying of large numbers of Chinese warplanes into Taiwan's air defense identification zone, including a single-day record of 56 on Monday, capping a total of 149 flights over a four-day period.

Xi is to deliver a speech Saturday on the eve of Taiwan's National Day. The unusually high-profile address will be watched carefully for signs of outreach to the Taiwanese public or any hardening of China's line.

## WHAT IS THE U.S. ROLE?

The U.S., with bases in Japan, South Korea and Guam, has a large military presence in the region and has been pursuing a "pivot" in focus toward the Indo-Pacific to counter China's increasingly assertive posture.

In a speech this week, U.S. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro told cadets that China would be the "challenge that will define your naval careers," saying Beijing is using its military leverage to "threaten its neighbors, challenge established norms, and attempt to control international waters as its own."

"Our job is to preserve the peace by making sure the People's Republic of China doesn't gain military leverage over the United States or our allies and partners," he said.

To that end, the U.S. regularly holds exercises in the region with multiple allies, including a recent one involving 17 ships from six countries that took place northeast of Taiwan off the Japanese island of Okinawa at the same time as the Chinese flights south of Taiwan.

Washington's longstanding policy has been to provide political and military support for Taiwan, while not explicitly promising to defend it from a Chinese attack.

Though the U.S. has no bases on Taiwan, American officials confirmed this week that special forces have been training with the Taiwan military for more than a year, including maritime operations with Marine commandos in recent weeks.

U.S. military support for Taiwan is "based on an assessment of Taiwan's defense needs and the threat posed by" China, Pentagon spokesman John Supple said.

Last month before the U.N. General Assembly, U.S. President Joe Biden did not mention China by name but emphasized that the U.S. would "stand up for our allies and our friends and oppose attempts by stronger countries to dominate weaker ones."

## WHAT IS TAIWAN'S POSITION?

Taiwan is chiefly concerned with shoring up its de facto independent status while maintaining economic links with China and avoiding a military clash.

While Taipei and Washington have not had official diplomatic relations since the U.S. switched ties to Beijing in 1979, U.S. law requires that Washington assist Taiwan in maintaining a defensive capability and treat threats to the island as a matter of "grave concern." That has included sales of advanced radar systems, fighter jets and warships that have angered China.

Along with purchasing arms from the U.S., President Tsai Ing-wen has boosted the domestic military industry, particularly development of submarines considered crucial to defense, but which Taiwan has been

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 23 of 78

unable to buy from abroad due to Chinese pressure. Taiwan will display some of its arms on Sunday at the first National Day military parade held since Tsai took office in 2016.

Taiwan is also fighting back against a Chinese campaign to isolate it diplomatically, hosting U.S. officials on recent visits and this week a delegation of French senators and former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who accused China of being a bully and expressed enthusiastic support for Taiwan's government amid a sharp downturn in relations between Beijing and Canberra.

## WHAT ABOUT OTHER REGIONAL PLAYERS?

Australia made a strong statement last month when it announced it was scrapping a \$66 billion deal with France for diesel-powered submarines in favor of a new pact with the U.S. and Britain for nuclear-powered subs.

The decision was seen as a doubling down on the Australia-U.S. alliance at a time when China is pressuring Australia with tariffs and import bans. Beijing slammed the deal, under which the U.S. and U.K. will help Australia construct at least eight submarines, calling it "highly irresponsible" and saying it would "seriously damage regional peace and stability."

The leaders of Australia, the U.S., Japan and India — a group known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue — met in Washington shortly after the submarine deal was announced for broad talks that included discussions on how to keep the Indo-Pacific "free and open."

India has joined regional maneuvers, significantly sending ships through the South China Sea to take part in exercises with the U.S., Japan and Australia off Guam in August, whose purpose New Delhi said was to show a "commitment toward freedom of navigation at sea."

China and India are involved in a land border dispute that led to clashes this year and last year. India has also been concerned with the increasing presence of Chinese research vessels and fishing trawlers in the Indian Ocean region, which are allowed under international law but it suspects are collecting data for military purposes.

Japan has long been cautious with its relations with China, a key trading partner, but now increasingly views the country as a security threat. New Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said dialogue with China is important, but Japan should also team up with like-minded democracies and step up its security alliance with the U.S. and other partners.

## WHAT'S EUROPE'S INVOLVEMENT?

Britain has recently been among the most engaged in the region, combining an enhanced diplomatic outreach with the dispatch of a carrier strike group on a 28-week deployment as it pursues a "tilt" toward the Indo-Pacific recommended by a British government review of defense and foreign policy.

As a maritime trading nation, Britain has emphasized the need to keep commercial shipping routes free and has been using its naval presence to reinforce established international lanes, such as sending the frigate HMS Richmond through the Taiwan Strait in a move criticized by China as a "meaningless display of presence with an insidious intention."

The European Union last month unveiled its own strategy to boost political and defense ties in the Indo Pacific, emphasizing the need for dialogue with Beijing but at the same time proposing an enhanced naval presence and greater security cooperation with regional partners.

France has regularly sent naval vessels to the region, and at the moment both the Netherlands and Germany have ships taking part in ongoing exercises with the U.S. and other navies. More than enhancing the military presence, the wide range of forces involved is a way to counter the Chinese position that it is reacting to unilateral American actions.

In his speech, U.S. Navy Secretary Del Toro said there was "no substitute for the shared experiences of allies working together to deter our adversaries."

## **Blast at Afghan mosque kills many, witnesses and Taliban say**

Associated Press undefined

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A powerful explosion in a mosque frequented by a religious minority group

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 24 of 78

in northern Afghanistan on Friday has left several casualties, witnesses and the Taliban's spokesman said.

The blast occurred in a Shiite mosque in Kunduz province during the weekly Friday prayer service at the Gozar-e-Sayed Abad Mosque when members of the Shiite religious minority typically come in large numbers for worship. Witness Ali Reza said he was praying at the time of the explosion and reported seeing many casualties.

Taliban chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the Shiite mosque was the target and that a "large number" of worshippers were killed and wounded. He said Taliban special forces had arrived to the scene and were investigating the incident.

The cause of the blast was not immediately clear. No group has yet claimed responsibility for it.

The Taliban leadership has been grappling with a growing threat from the local Islamic State affiliate, known as the Islamic State in Khorasan. IS militants have ramped up attacks to target their rivals, including two deadly bombings in Kabul.

IS has also targeted Afghanistan's religious minorities in attacks.

## Senate avoids a US debt disaster, votes to extend borrowing

By KEVIN FREKING, ALAN FRAM and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate has dodged a U.S. debt disaster, voting to extend the government's borrowing authority into December and temporarily avert an unprecedented federal default that experts warned would devastate the economy and harm millions of Americans.

The party-line Democratic vote of 50-48 in support of the bill to raise the government's debt ceiling by nearly a half-trillion dollars brought instant relief in Washington and far beyond. However, it provides only a reprieve. Assuming the House goes along with the Senate's Thursday night vote, which it will, Republican and Democratic lawmakers will still have to tackle their deep differences on the issue once more before yearend.

That debate will take place as lawmakers also work to fund the federal government for the new fiscal year and as they keep up their bitter battling over President Joe Biden's top domestic priorities — a bipartisan infrastructure plan with nearly \$550 billion in new spending as well as a much more expansive, \$3.5 trillion effort focused on health, safety net programs and the environment.

Easing the crisis at hand — a disastrous default looming in just weeks — the Republican Senate leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, offered his support for allowing a short-term extension of the government's borrowing authority after leading solid GOP opposition to a longer extension. He acted as Biden and business leaders ramped up their concerns that a default would disrupt government payments to millions of Americans and throw the nation into recession.

The GOP concession to give up its blockade for now was not popular with some members of McConnell's Republican caucus, who complained that the nation's debt levels are unsustainable.

"I can't vote to raise this debt ceiling, not right now, especially given the plans at play to increase spending immediately by another \$3.5 trillion," Sen. Mike Lee of Utah said shortly before the vote.

Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas said the Democrats had been on "a path to surrender" on the process used to lift the debt cap, "and then unfortunately, yesterday, Republicans blinked."

But Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska was among those voting to end debate and allow a vote on the bill. "I'm not willing to let this train go off the cliff," she said.

Eleven Republicans voted to end debate, providing the threshold needed to move the bill to a final vote. However, no Republicans sided with Democrats in the final vote for the measure. McConnell has insisted that the majority party will have to increase the debt ceiling on its own.

Congress has just days to act before the Oct. 18 deadline after which the Treasury Department has warned it will quickly run short of funds to handle the nation's already accrued debt load.

The House is likely to approve the measure next week. After the Senate action, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer announced the House is being called back to session Tuesday evening for votes.

Republican leaders worked through the day to find the 10 votes they needed from their party to advance



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 25 of 78

the debt limit extension to a final vote, holding a private huddle late in the afternoon. It was a long and "spirited" discussion in the room, said Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri.

McConnell allowed for an airing of all views and ultimately told the senators he would be voting yes to limit debate.

The vote started with McConnell and South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the second-ranking Republican, waiting patiently as slowly, but surely, nine of their GOP colleagues came and gave the anticipated thumbs up. When Cruz voted no, McConnell joked: "I thought you were undecided. Thanks for showing up."

The White House signaled Biden's support, with principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre saying the president would sign a bill to raise the debt limit when it passed Congress. Jabbing the Republicans, she also said, "It gives us some breathing room from the catastrophic default we were approaching because of Sen. McConnell's decision to play politics with our economy."

Wall Street rallied modestly Thursday on news of the agreement.

The accord sets the stage for a sequel of sorts in December, when Congress will again face pressing deadlines to fund the government and raise the debt limit before heading home for the holidays.

The \$480 billion increase in the debt ceiling is the level that the Treasury Department has said is needed to get safely to Dec. 3.

"I thank my Democratic colleagues for showing unity in solving this Republican-manufactured crisis," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York. "Despite immense opposition from Leader McConnell and members of his conference, our caucus held together and we have pulled our country back from the cliff's edge that Republicans tried to push us over."

McConnell saw it quite differently.

"The pathway our Democratic colleagues have accepted will spare the American people any near-term crisis, while definitively resolving the majority's excuse that they lacked time to address the debt limit through (reconciliation)," McConnell said Thursday. "Now there will be no question: They'll have plenty of time."

McConnell and fellow Senate Republicans still insist that the Democrats go it alone to raise the debt ceiling longer term. Further, McConnell has insisted that Democrats use the same cumbersome legislative process called reconciliation that they used to pass a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill and have been employing to try to pass Biden's \$3.5 trillion measure to boost safety net, health and environmental programs.

On Wednesday, Biden had enlisted top business leaders to push for immediately suspending the debt limit, saying the approaching deadline created the risk of a historic default that would be like a "meteor" that could crush the U.S. economy and send waves of damage worldwide.

At a White House event, the president shamed Republican senators for threatening to filibuster any suspension of the \$28.4 trillion cap. He leaned into the credibility of corporate America — a group that has traditionally been aligned with the GOP on tax and regulatory issues — to drive home his point as the heads of Citi, JP Morgan Chase and Nasdaq gathered in person and virtually to say the debt limit must be lifted.

"It's not right and it's dangerous," Biden said of the resistance by Senate Republicans.

Once a routine matter, raising the debt limit has become politically treacherous over the past decade or more, used by Republicans, in particular, to rail against government spending and the rising debt load.

---

AP writers Lisa Mascaró, Farnoush Amiri and Josh Boak in Washington and AP Business Writer Damian J. Troise in New York contributed to this report.

## Americans agree misinformation is a problem, poll shows

By AMANDA SEITZ and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly all Americans agree that the rampant spread of misinformation is a problem. Most also think social media companies, and the people that use them, bear a good deal of blame for the situation. But few are very concerned that they themselves might be responsible, according to a new poll from The Pearson Institute and the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 26 of 78

Ninety-five percent of Americans identified misinformation as a problem when they're trying to access important information. About half put a great deal of blame on the U.S. government, and about three-quarters point to social media users and tech companies. Yet only 2 in 10 Americans say they're very concerned that they have personally spread misinformation.

More — about 6 in 10 — are at least somewhat concerned that their friends or family members have been part of the problem.

For Carmen Speller, a 33-year-old graduate student in Lexington, Kentucky, the divisions are evident when she's discussing the coronavirus pandemic with close family members. Speller trusts COVID-19 vaccines; her family does not. She believes the misinformation her family has seen on TV or read on questionable news sites has swayed them in their decision to stay unvaccinated against COVID-19.

In fact, some of her family members think she's crazy for trusting the government for information about COVID-19.

"I do feel like they believe I'm misinformed. I'm the one that's blindly following what the government is saying, that's something I hear a lot," Speller said. "It's come to the point where it does create a lot of tension with my family and some of my friends as well."

Speller isn't the only one who may be having those disagreements with her family.

The survey found that 61% of Republicans say the U.S. government has a lot of responsibility for spreading misinformation, compared to just 38% of Democrats.

There's more bipartisan agreement, however, about the role that social media companies, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, play in the spread of misinformation.

According to the poll, 79% of Republicans and 73% of Democrats said social media companies have a great deal or quite a bit of responsibility for misinformation.

And that type of rare partisan agreement among Americans could spell trouble for tech giants like Facebook, the largest and most profitable of the social media platforms, which is under fire from Republican and Democrat lawmakers alike.

"The AP-NORC poll is bad news for Facebook," said Konstantin Sonin, a professor of public policy at the University of Chicago who is affiliated with the Pearson Institute. "It makes clear that assaulting Facebook is popular by a large margin — even when Congress is split 50-50, and each side has its own reasons."

During a congressional hearing Tuesday, senators vowed to hit Facebook with new regulations after a whistleblower testified that the company's own research shows its algorithms amplify misinformation and content that harms children.

"It has profited off spreading misinformation and disinformation and sowing hate," Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said during a meeting of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection. Democrats and Republicans ended the hearing with acknowledgement that regulations must be introduced to change the way Facebook amplifies its content and targets users.

The poll also revealed that Americans are willing to blame just about everybody but themselves for spreading misinformation, with 53% of them saying they're not concerned that they've spread misinformation.

"We see this a lot of times where people are very worried about misinformation but they think it's something that happens to other people — other people get fooled by it, other people spread it," said Lisa Fazio, a Vanderbilt University psychology professor who studies how false claims spread. "Most people don't recognize their own role in it."

Younger adults tend to be more concerned that they've shared falsehoods, with 25% of those ages 18 to 29 very or extremely worried that they have spread misinformation, compared to just 14% of adults ages 60 and older. Sixty-three percent of older adults are not concerned, compared with roughly half of other Americans.

Yet it's older adults who should be more worried about spreading misinformation, given that research shows they're more likely to share an article from a false news website, Fazio said.

Before she shares things with family or her friends on Facebook, Speller tries her best to make sure the information she's passing on about important topics like COVID-19 has been peer-reviewed or comes from a credible medical institution. Still, Speller acknowledges there has to have been a time or two that

she “liked” or hit “share” on a post that didn’t get all the facts quite right.

“I’m sure it has happened,” Speller said. “I tend to not share things on social media that I didn’t find on verified sites. I’m open to that if someone were to point out, ‘Hey this isn’t right,’ I would think, OK, let me check this.”

The AP-NORC poll of 1,071 adults was conducted Sept. 9-13 using a sample drawn from NORC’s probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.9 percentage points.

## Mystery lingers around cause of California oil pipeline leak

By MATTHEW BROWN, BRIAN MELLEY, and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Investigators searching for the cause of an oil pipeline break off the Southern California coast have pointed to the possibility that a ship anchor dragged the line across the seabed and cracked it, but two videos released so far provide only tantalizing clues about what might have happened 100 feet (30 meters) below the ocean surface.

A Coast Guard video released Thursday appears to show a trench in the seafloor leading to a bend in the submerged line, but experts offered varied opinions of the significance of the brief, grainy shots. An earlier video revealed a 13-inch (33-centimeter) rupture in the line, but the pipe showed no evidence of damage that they said would be expected from a collision with a multi-ton anchor from cargo ships that routinely move through the area off the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The slight bow in the line displayed in one video “doesn’t necessarily look like anchor damage,” Frank G. Adams, president of Houston-based Interface Consulting International, said in an email. When a pipeline is hit by an anchor or other heavy object “that typically results in physical damage that may lead to a fracture.”

Ramanan Krishnamoorti, a petroleum engineering professor at the University of Houston, said he considered the video that runs along a bend in the line “revealing.”

“It seems to me you’ve got something that was dragged in the sand that might have impacted the pipeline,” he said. However, he remained puzzled that the leak came from a crack and not a larger gash, assuming it was hit by an anchor or some other object.

Key questions remain: Could the line have been hit days before the leak started? What ship is responsible? And if a ship anchor is not the culprit, what else could it be?

Investigators, meanwhile, continued to hunt for the cause of the break that spilled tens of thousands of gallons of crude oil off the famed surf breaks of Huntington Beach, as well as determine what happened in the crucial early hours after reports of a possible oil spill first came in.

The 13-inch-long (33-centimeter), narrow gash seen in one video could explain why signs of an oil slick were seen Friday night, but the spill eluded detection by the pipeline operator until Saturday morning, experts said.

“My experience suggests this would be a darned hard leak to remotely determine quickly,” said Richard Kuprewicz, a private pipeline accident investigator and consultant. “An opening of this type, on a 17-mile-long (27-kilometer) underwater pipe is very hard to spot by remote indications. These crack-type releases are lower rate and can go for quite a while.”

When pipes experience a catastrophic failure, the breach typically is much bigger, what’s referred to in the industry as a “fish mouth” rupture because it gapes wide like the mouth of a fish, he said.

Amplify Energy, a Houston-based company that owns and operates three offshore oil platforms and the pipeline south of Los Angeles, said it didn’t know there had been a spill until its workers detected an oil sheen on the water Saturday at 8:09 a.m.

The cause of the spill is under investigation by numerous agencies as the cleanup continues along miles of shoreline on the Orange County coast south of the sister ports.

The Coast Guard on Thursday slightly revised spill estimates to at least about 25,000 gallons (95,000

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 28 of 78

liters) and no more than 132,000 gallons (500,000 liters).

The Coast Guard on Thursday said it is investigating the incident with other agencies as a "major marine casualty" due to the potential involvement of a vessel and damages exceeding \$500,000. It said they will determine if criminal charges, civil penalties or new laws or regulations are needed.

The leak occurred about 5 miles (8 kilometers) offshore at a depth of about 98 feet (30 meters), investigators said. A 4,000-foot (1,219-meter) section of the pipeline was dislodged 105 feet (32 meters), bent back like the string on a bow, Amplify's CEO Martyn Willsher has said.

Jonathan Stewart, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of California, Los Angeles, said he was surprised the damage wasn't more severe given how far the pipe was moved.

"My first reaction when I heard that it is displaced so far was that it's remarkable that it's even intact at all," Stewart said.

Moving a large section of pipe up to 105 feet (32 meters) would have caused "bending deformations" – tension on the side that was stretched into a semicircle, with compression on the other, as it was bent inward, Stewart said.

It's possible such pressure alone could result in a break, though Stewart said there is too little information to make a conclusion about the cause. It's possible a sharp section of anchor could pierce the pipeline but "you could still have damage just from the bending."

"Because it's pulling on the pipe, you create these bending stresses in the pipe, which could eventually become large enough that they rupture it," he said.

Questions remain about when the oil company knew it had a problem and delays in reporting the spill.

A foreign ship anchored in the waters off Huntington Beach reported to the Coast Guard that it saw a sheen longer than 2 miles (3 kilometers) just after 6 p.m. A satellite image shot by the European Space Agency indicated a likely oil slick in the area around 7 p.m., which was reported to the Coast Guard at 2:06 a.m. Saturday after being reviewed by a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration analyst.

Federal pipeline safety regulators have put the time of the incident at 2:30 a.m. Saturday but say the company didn't shut down the pipeline until 6:01 a.m. and didn't report the leak to the Coast Guard until 9:07 a.m. Federal and state rules require immediate notification of spills.

Willsher, who took questions alongside Coast Guard and other officials over four days, did not show up at Thursday's news conference. Other officials declined to explain his absence.

The type of crack seen in the Coast Guard video is big enough to allow some oil to escape to potentially trigger the low pressure alarm, Kuprewicz said. But because the pipeline was operating under relatively low pressure, the control room operator may have simply dismissed the alarm because the pressure was not very high to begin, he said.

Because the line is encased in concrete — a means of keeping it weighted down on the sea floor — the Coast Guard videos don't reveal the condition of the half-inch-thick steel pipe underneath.

Once federal safety investigators cut out the damaged section of pipe and remove it, they will be able to conduct a closer examination, looking for signs of corrosion, metal fatigue or other anomalies that would have made it more susceptible to failure. That examination should also reveal if the crack grew larger over time, Kuprewicz said.

Michael R. Blood contributed from Los Angeles.

## India staring at power crisis with coal stocks down to days

By KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — An energy crisis is looming over India as coal supplies grow perilously low, adding to challenges for a recovery in Asia's third largest economy after it was wracked by the pandemic.

Supplies across the majority of coal-fired power plants in India have dwindled to just days worth of stock. Federal Power Minister R. K. Singh told the Indian Express newspaper this week that he was bracing for a "trying five to six months."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 29 of 78

"I can't say I am secure ... With less than three days of stock, you can't be secure," Singh said.

The shortages have stoked fears of potential black-outs in parts of India, where 70% of power is generated from coal. Experts say the crunch could upset renewed efforts to ramp up manufacturing.

Power cuts and shortages over the years have subsided in big cities, but are fairly common in some smaller towns.

Out of India's 135 coal plants, 108 were facing critically low stocks, with 28 of them down to just one day's worth of supply, according to power ministry data released on Wednesday, the most recently available.

On average, coal supplies at power plants had fallen to about four days worth of stock as of the weekend, the ministry said in a statement. That's a sharp plunge from 13 days in August.

Power consumption in August jumped by nearly 20% from the same month in 2019, before the pandemic struck, the power ministry said.

"Nobody expected economic growth to revive like this and for energy demand to shoot up so quickly," said Vibhuti Garg, an energy economist at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

The shortfalls in supply were worsened by flooding of mines and other disruptions from unusually heavy rains, Garg said.

India mostly relies on domestically mined coal. With global coal prices at an all-time high, increasing imports is not an option, experts said.

The government has asked state-run Coal India Ltd. to increase production.

Coal prices in Indonesia, one of India's suppliers, swelled to nearly \$162 per ton this month from \$86.68 in April, boosted by surging demand in China, where recent power cuts have forced factories to shut down and left some households in the dark.

"With the current prices, it is difficult for India to rely on external sources for coal as it's about two or three times more than what we pay domestically right now," said Swati DSouza, research lead at National Foundation for India.

With monsoon rains receding, coal deliveries have picked up and are likely to rise further, according to the power ministry. An official team is monitoring the situation and following up with Coal India Ltd. and the railways to improve supplies, the ministry said.

But the crisis has highlighted India's need to develop more renewable energy resources given that demand is likely to keep increasing.

It should serve as a "turning point for India," where there is ample renewable energy potential to help offset such disruptions, said Sunil Dahiya, an analyst at the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

"The situation shouldn't be used to push for more coal -- that is not the crisis. The solution going forward is to move away from coal and other fossil fuels," he said.

—

AP science writer Victoria Milko contributed from Jakarta, Indonesia.

## Israel, Palestinian militants use bodies as bargaining chips

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

ABU DIS, West Bank (AP) — More than a year after his son was killed by Israeli forces under disputed circumstances in the occupied West Bank, Mustafa Erekat is still seeking his remains.

It is one of dozens of cases in which Israel is holding the remains of Palestinians killed in conflict, citing the need to deter attacks and potentially exchange them for the remains of two Israeli soldiers held by the Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians and human rights groups view the practice of holding bodies as a form of collective punishment that inflicts further suffering on bereaved families.

"They have no right to keep my son, and it is my right for my son to have a good funeral," Erekat said.

The Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center, a Palestinian rights group, says Israel is holding the bodies of at least 82 Palestinians since the policy was established in 2015. It says many are buried in secret cemeteries where the plots are only marked by plaques of numbers. Hamas holds the remains of

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 30 of 78

the two Israeli soldiers killed during the 2014 Gaza war in an undisclosed location.

Last year, Israel's Security Cabinet expanded the policy to include the holding of the remains of all Palestinians killed during alleged attacks, and not just those connected to Hamas. Israel considers Hamas, which rules Gaza, a terrorist group.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz said at the time that holding the remains deterred attacks and would help ensure the return of Israeli captives and remains. The Defense Ministry declined to comment on the policy.

One of the bodies is that of Erekat's son, Ahmed, who Israeli officials say was shot and killed after deliberately plowing into a military checkpoint in June 2020. Security camera footage shows the car veering into a group of Israeli soldiers and sending one of them flying back. Ahmed steps out of the car and raises one of his hands before he is shot multiple times and falls to the ground.

His family says it was an accident. Mustafa said his son was passing through the checkpoint on his way to the nearby city of Bethlehem to buy clothes for his sister's wedding later that night. The shooting attracted widespread attention, in part because Ahmed was the nephew of Saeb Erekat, a veteran Palestinian spokesman and negotiator who died last year.

Ahmed was to get married soon, his father said: "He had a house that was ready for him."

To this day, he has no idea where his son's remains are.

Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director at the New York-based Human Rights Watch, said Israel has turned "corpses into bargaining chips." The policy is "deliberately and unlawfully punishing the families of the deceased, who are not accused of any wrongdoing," he said.

Israel has a long history of exchanging prisoners and remains with its enemies. In 2011, it traded more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners for an Israeli soldier who had been captured by Palestinian militants five years earlier and was being held in Gaza.

In 2008, it traded five Lebanese prisoners, including a notorious militant, and the remains of nearly 200 Lebanese and Palestinians killed in fighting, for the remains of two Israeli soldiers captured by the Lebanese militant Hezbollah group two years earlier.

Egypt has been mediating negotiations over a similar agreement that would return the remains of the two soldiers, as well as two Israeli civilians believed to be alive, held by Hamas in Gaza.

In the meantime, the Erekat's and other Palestinian families must turn to Israel's Supreme Court in a process involving multiple hearings that can drag on for years.

The court denied a recent appeal by the Erekat's, citing confidential information submitted by the military. Mustafa Erekat says the system is rigged. He accused the court of dragging its feet until the policy on holding the remains was expanded and then relying on secret evidence.

Mohammed Aliyan, spokesman for six Palestinian families who filed a Supreme Court petition for the return of their relatives' bodies in 2016, said the judges initially sided with the families before an appeal from the military.

"They always go along with the military's demands," Aliyan told The Associated Press, "They are afraid to take any decision against them."

Liron Libman, an expert on military law at the Israel Democracy Institute, said there are situations where certain pieces of information can't be made public for fear of exposing protected sources or special operations.

"Each side has the right to request a postponement of the hearing, and the court will accept the request if it believes it is for a justifiable reason," Libman told the AP.

Even if a family's petition is successful, locating relatives' bodies for exhumation can pose further challenges, especially in cases when bodies were buried decades ago.

Rami Saleh, the director of Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center, said his organization has dealt with cases where Israeli authorities were unable to locate bodies and also those where Palestinian family members needed to take DNA tests to confirm the remains of a relative.

Mustafa said he has not given up hope and intends to challenge the Supreme Court's decision. In the meantime, he and Aliyan, the spokesman for the other families, attend weekly sit-ins calling for the release of all bodies held by Israeli authorities.

"The feeling of not being able to bury your relative's body is more painful than their death," Aliyan said.

## Kishida vows to lead with 'trust and empathy' to fix Japan

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — In his first policy speech Friday, Japan's new Prime Minister Fumio Kishida promised to strengthen pandemic management and health care in case of another coronavirus resurgence, and turn around the battered economy while bolstering the country's defenses against threats from China and North Korea.

Tasked with a crucial mission of rallying public support ahead of national elections expected on Oct. 31, Kishida promised to pursue politics of "trust and empathy."

He was elected by parliament and sworn in Monday as Japan's 100th prime minister, succeeding Yoshihide Suga who left after only a year in office. Suga's perceived high-handed approach to virus measures and holding the Olympics despite rising cases angered the public and hurt the ruling Liberal Democrats.

"I will devote my body and soul to overcome the national crisis together with the people to pioneer the new era so that we can pass a bountiful Japan to the next generation," said Kishida.

He promised to be more attentive to public concerns and needs, and prepare virus measures based on "a worst case scenario." That includes taking advantage of a drop in infections to improve crisis management before the weather turns cold, approving COVID-19 treatment pills by the end of December and digitalize vaccine certificates for use at home as Japan gradually tries to expand social and economic activity, Kishida said.

A former moderate who recently turned hawk on security issues, he said Japan should also increase preparedness for growing regional threats.

He said the security environment has become more severe, and that he would revise Japan's national security and defense strategy to bolster missile defense capability and naval defense.

"I'm determined to defend our land, territorial seas and air space, and the people's lives and assets, no matter what," Kishida said.

Japan-U.S. alliance remains as the "lynchpin" of diplomatic and security policies, he said, and vowed to further elevate the partnership, which "also serves the foundation of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and the entire world."

Kishida said "establishing a stable relationship with China is important not only for the two countries but also for the region and the international community." Still, Japan, when necessary, will "speak up" against China's unilateral and coercive activity in the region, while cooperating with other like-minded democracies.

China has become bolder in pursuing its territorial claims in the disputed South China Sea, where it constructed several man-made islands and turned them into military installations, as well as around the Japanese-controlled East China Sea island of Senkaku, which China also claims. Beijing also has escalated its military activities around self-ruled Taiwan, which it views as part of its territory.

North Korea's missile and nuclear development cannot be tolerated, but Japan seeks to normalize diplomatic ties with Pyongyang by resolving the "unfortunate (wartime) past," and the decades-old issue of Japanese citizens abducted to the North, Kishida said.

Kishida repeated that he is ready to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un toward making a breakthrough.

Kishida repeated his policy goals made during the recent governing party leadership race, and pledged to achieve "a positive cycle of growth and distribution" in a society that balances daily lives and the danger of the coronavirus.

He said he seeks to promote growth by investment into cutting-edge research and development and promoting digitalization to modernize bureaucracy, services and industries, while encouraging companies to hike wages. He also wants to step up government support for education and living costs. Many experts, however, are skeptical if income raise could be possible.

Kishida said he hopes to close divisions caused by the pandemic that has worsened gaps between the rich and the poor.

## Opal Lee's Juneteenth dream came true, but she isn't done

By JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — Opal Lee's dream of seeing Juneteenth become a federal holiday was finally realized over the summer, but the energetic woman who spent years rallying people to join her push for the day commemorating the end of slavery is hardly letting up on a lifetime of work teaching and helping others.

Lee, who celebrated her 95th birthday Thursday, has devoted decades to making a difference in her Texas hometown of Fort Worth. She then saw her legacy in recent years stretch far beyond the city as she worked to get national recognition for Juneteenth, and stood beside President Joe Biden as he signed into law the bill making June 19 a federal holiday that commemorates when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas, after the Civil War.

"We don't want people to think that Juneteenth is a stopping point, because it isn't," Lee, who worked for over two decades as a teacher and counselor in the Fort Worth school district, told The Associated Press. "It's a beginning, and we're going to address some of the disparities that we know exist."

Her recent work in Fort Worth has included establishing a large community garden that produced 7,700 pounds of fruits and vegetables last year, delivering food to people who can't leave their homes and working alongside others to transform a former Ku Klux Klan auditorium into a museum and center for the arts.

As for Juneteenth, she'd like to see festivities span until the Fourth of July — and incorporate events to provide resources to help people with finances, health and other issues.

Lee was born in 1926 in Marshall, nestled in the Piney Woods of East Texas near the border with Louisiana. Her family later moved to Fort Worth when her father took a job there working on the railroad, but her Juneteenth memories stretch back to her celebrations in Marshall as a young girl.

"They'd have music and food. They'd have games and food. They'd have all kinds of entertainment and food. It was just like another Christmas," Lee said.

Her memories of Juneteenth also include a harrowing attack on her family on that day in 1939, when a white mob of hundreds descended on their Fort Worth home days after the Black family moved into a white neighborhood. She, her parents and two brothers all managed to escape, but her parents never talked about that day again. The mob smashed windows and furniture, according to newspaper reports from the time.

"We would have been good neighbors, but they didn't give us the chance to let them know how good we could have been," Lee said.

Lee's childhood came in the shadow of widespread white-on-Black violence in the U.S. In 1921, a white mob went on a deadly rampage in Tulsa, Oklahoma, burning over 1,000 homes and destroying a thriving business district known as Black Wall Street. Two years prior, hundreds of Black people were beaten, hanged, shot and burned to death by white mobs around the U.S. in what's known as the "Red Summer."

Lee is among numerous people who have pushed for a national Juneteenth holiday over the years.

Her granddaughter, Dione Sims, said it was in 2016 that Lee decided the effort to was taking too long. "She said, 'It just needs some attention,'" Sims said.

Reasoning that "somebody would notice a little old lady in tennis shoes," Lee planned to walk from Fort Worth to Washington, D.C. That morphed into Lee doing walks in cities before traveling to the nation's capital. She went on to organize more walks, meet with politicians and gather signatures. Her efforts drew recognition from celebrities, including Sean "Diddy" Combs, Lupita Nyong'o and Usher.

"You have to have people who are dedicated to making things happen, and she was certainly dedicated to that and pulling things forward," said Annette Gordon-Reed, a Harvard University professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian whose book "On Juneteenth" was published this year.

Educating young people remains a focus for Lee, who earned a master's degree in education from what is now the University of North Texas in Denton. She wants to make sure that students' textbooks tell the full history of racial injustices in the U.S. so that "we can heal from it and not let it happen again."



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 33 of 78

Recently, what schools teach about race and racism has become a political lightning rod, with some Republican-led states, including Texas, banning or limiting the teaching of certain concepts.

"I'm adamant about schools actually having the truth told," said Lee, who has written a children's book titled "Juneteenth" that helps teach the history of slavery.

In one of her most recent projects, Lee is a founding member of a coalition called Transform 1012 N. Main Street, which is working to turn that Fort Worth building — a former KKK auditorium — into the Fred Rouse Center and Museum for Arts and Community Healing, carrying the name of a Black man lynched in 1921.

"Let's make it where people can come and see this reconciliation and all kinds of things that need to be done," Lee said.

Adam W. McKinney and Daniel Banks, co-founders of the arts and service organization DNAWORKS, brought together local activists for the project. McKinney said Lee has a way of leading that invites others to join.

"I learn so much from her in every one of our interactions," McKinney said.

Brenda Sanders-Wise, executive director of the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society, a group that Lee was a charter member of, said Lee has a penchant for describing herself as "just a little old lady in tennis shoes getting in everybody's business." Sanders-Wise can think of a few other ways to describe her.

"She's an advocate, an activist, a leader, a strategist and a shrewd tactician, that's who Opal Lee is to me," Sanders-Wise said. "I call her an agent of change."

## The AP Interview: Jayapal pushes Biden for \$3T spending bill

By PADMANANDA RAMA and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Washington Rep. Pramila Jayapal, the head of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, says she has pushed President Joe Biden to hold the line and keep his ambitious social spending plan closer to \$3 trillion instead of the \$2 trillion range that he has floated to Democrats in recent days.

Jayapal told The Associated Press in an interview Thursday that she had told Biden that his suggestion for compromise was "too low, and I said that I would really like to be closer to three." The original amount for the package of Democratic initiatives, including expanded child care, health care, education and environmental programs, was \$3.5 trillion.

The Washington state Democrat has emerged as a top negotiator in the talks on Capitol Hill, using the clout of her liberal caucus — and its nearly 100 members — to thwart a group of House moderates who demanded a vote last week on a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill.

Biden tacitly endorsed the progressive caucus's strategy last week, insisting that the spending package full of longtime Democratic priorities be linked to infrastructure. But he also floated trimming it back to a range between \$1.9 trillion and \$2.3 trillion, drawing pushback from Jayapal and others.

Jayapal said that the conversation is ongoing and she isn't "drawing any red lines" in the negotiations. A White House spokesman declined to comment on any private conversations.

"The president knows" that progressives are pushing for the higher amount, Jayapal said. "I said it directly to him, I also said to his top aides, and we're going to continue to figure out where we can go."

In only her fifth year in Congress, Jayapal is holding her growing caucus of liberals firmly together, marshaling influence that the left wing of the party hasn't had in years. In doing so, she is hoping to help Biden win passage of his agenda, which includes a slate of social programs that Democrats have desired for decades.

A small group of moderate House Democrats hoped to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill alone and work on the social spending package later. But fearful that moderates would sink the larger bill, Jayapal and her members insisted that the two remain linked. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi abandoned a planned vote on the infrastructure measure after it became clear they lacked support to pass it.

Jayapal says she's "proud of this moment" not only because she is a woman of color at the negotiating

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 34 of 78

table — she emigrated from India at age 16 and became the first Indian-American woman to serve in the House when she was elected in 2016 — but also because her caucus has stayed unified.

“We are fighting for something that will benefit the entire country,” she said.

But enactment of Biden’s agenda is far from certain. There are bigger obstacles in the Senate, where the support of moderate Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona will be needed for anything to pass. Both want the proposal scaled back.

And while the liberals are fighting for Biden’s priorities, their stance risks dividing a party that remained mostly united through Donald Trump’s presidency. With thin margins in both the House and Senate, those splits could ultimately leave the party — as Biden told the caucus last week — with nothing.

Some see an echo of the 2010 Tea Party wave. Like the progressives, the conservatives elected that year — who later formed the Freedom Caucus — often withheld their votes to shape the agenda and force concessions from their leadership.

Jayapal rejects those comparisons to the Freedom Caucus, which she says is a “caucus of no.” The Congressional Progressive Caucus, she said, “is trying to get things done.”

As chairwoman of the Progressive Caucus, Jayapal has proven to be an ambitious foil to the moderates, following the path blazed by liberal icon Bernie Sanders, the Vermont senator and former Democratic presidential candidate who is fighting for the progressive priorities in the Senate.

But Jayapal seems to have another mentor in mind. She recently compared herself to Pelosi, who is renowned for her skill at counting and winning votes. “I am a good vote counter also,” Jayapal told reporters amid the negotiations.

“I was an organizer for 20 years before I came to Congress, and I came in on a theory of change that if we really wanted to change politics so that they could work for working people, then we needed to be organizing on the inside,” Jayapal told The AP. “And so that’s what I’ve tried to do.”

She said she answers texts “at all hours of the night” and has worked to build up a progressive caucus that was “more like a social club” when she first arrived in 2016. The caucus has also worked since Democrats won the House majority in 2018 to work more closely with outside allies.

“We’re very, very strategic and coordinated,” Jayapal says. “So all of that I think has helped us to become a force, and it’s not something that happened overnight. It’s something we’ve been working towards for many years, over the last three years, and we’ve made incredible progress.”

She also credits Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, liberals who ran to the left of Biden, with pushing him to embrace many of the ideas now at the heart of his social spending plan.

“So when the president comes out and says this is my agenda, of course that helps us,” Jayapal says. “And we’ve elected more and more progressive members.”

## Stafford, Rams beat Seahawks 26-17; Wilson injures finger

By TIM BOOTH AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — Matthew Stafford was able to manage the discomfort with the finger on his throwing hand and pick apart the Seattle Seahawks’ beleaguered defense.

Meanwhile, Russell Wilson was left as a spectator. His own finger injury was too severe for the Seattle’s star quarterback to continue against the division rival.

“It was just a little bit out of place and was able to put it back in and keep going,” Stafford said. “It didn’t affect me too much, to be honest with you.”

Stafford seemed just fine, throwing for 365 yards and a touchdown and the Rams beat the Seahawks 26-17 on Thursday night in a game Wilson left in the second half with the finger injury on his throwing hand.

Wilson missed significant game time due to injury for the first time after injuring the middle finger on his throwing hand. Wilson was hurt by contact on a follow through midway through the third quarter. He attempted to direct one more drive before turning the game over to backup Geno Smith.

Seattle coach Pete Carroll said it was a “badly sprained finger,” and that further tests would be coming. “He wasn’t able to hold on to the football the way he needed to to throw,” Carroll said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 35 of 78

Held to just three points in the first half for only the fifth time in the regular season under Sean McVay, the Rams (4-1) woke up in the final 30 minutes and rebounded from their first loss of the season last Sunday to Arizona.

Stafford said his finger first started bothering him in the second quarter, but was manageable. He threw a 13-yard touchdown pass to Tyler Higbee late in the third quarter to give the Rams a 16-7 lead. Stafford hit DeSean Jackson for 68 yards earlier in the quarter on third-and-10 that led to Darrell Henderson's 5-yard run that gave Los Angeles its first lead of the game.

And after Seattle (2-3) pulled to 16-14 in the fourth quarter, Stafford was 4 of 4 for 71 yards on the ensuing drive leading to Sony Michel's 2-yard touchdown run with 6:08 remaining.

Robert Woods had 12 catches for 150 yards and the Rams won their second straight in Seattle after last January's playoff victory over the Seahawks.

"He was big when we were backed up, made some explosive plays," Stafford said about Woods. "He played great tonight."

The Rams finished with 476 yards of offense, the most they've amassed in their last 20 games since Week 3 vs Buffalo in 2020 when they had 478. It's also their third-biggest offensive game in the last two calendar years since Week 5 at Seattle in 2019 when they posted 477 yards.

Seattle pulled to 23-17 on Jason Myers' field goal from 32 yards with 2:45 left. Seattle forced a quick punt after Carlos Dunlap batting down Stafford's third-down pass.

But Smith couldn't lead a storybook final drive, with his first pass intercepted by Nick Scott as Tyler Lockett tripped making his break. Smith was 10 of 17 for 131 yards in the fourth quarter.

"I really thought we had a chance and I thought we were going to come back and get it done. Unfortunately, we didn't," Smith said.

Smith was needed because Wilson's fingers hit Aaron Donald's arm on the follow through of a pass that nearly went for a touchdown but was slightly overthrown midway through the third quarter.

Wilson remained in for one more series and attempted one pass. He was sacked on third-and-5 by Donald, No. 88 1/2 of his career setting a new franchise record — although the Rams records don't include Deacon Jones as sacks weren't an official stat when he played. Wilson never took another snap and finished 11 of 16 for 152 yards, one touchdown and his first interception of the season.

"It felt good and it's a blessing. It's even better when you can accomplish something like that coming off a divisional win," Donald said of the record.

Smith entered with Seattle backed up at its own 2. Since arriving in Seattle at the start of the 2019 season, Smith had thrown a total of five passes, all of them coming in a blowout win over the Jets last season.

On his first drive, Smith was perfect. He was 5 of 5 for 72 yards, the last a 23-yard strike to DK Metcalf for his second touchdown of the game with 9:23 remaining to pull Seattle to 16-14.

## KEY PENALTY

Seattle appeared to take a 14-3 lead at the end of the first half but a 15-yard touchdown pass to Lockett was called back on a holding penalty against Duane Brown. Jason Myers then missed a 35-yard field goal and the Seahawks had to settle for a 7-3 halftime advantage.

## INJURIES

Rams CB Darious Williams suffered an ankle injury in the fourth quarter and did not return. ... Seattle played without starting RB Chris Carson due to a neck issue.

## UP NEXT

Rams: At the New York Giants on Sunday, Oct. 17.

Seahawks: At Pittsburgh on Sunday, Oct. 17.

More AP NFL coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Texas judge says abortions can resume, but future uncertain

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 36 of 78

WASHINGTON (AP) — Abortions in Texas can resume under a federal judge's ruling this week, but for how long? A conservative federal appeals court, and ultimately the Supreme Court, might take a more skeptical look at the Biden administration's lawsuit over Texas' six-week abortion ban.

The state law prohibiting abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks, had been in effect for more than a month. U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman temporarily blocked it late Wednesday in a 113-page ruling that found the law violates a woman's right to an abortion.

But the legal fight over the law at this point isn't focused on abortion rights, but rather on who has the ability to mount a legal challenge to it and what a court can do.

Both the Supreme Court and the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals previously rejected pleas from abortion providers to keep the law from taking effect until courts could definitively rule on its constitutionality. It's not clear how they will rule in the new case or when they might be expected to weigh in.

Texas already has said it will appeal to the 5th Circuit and the loser there almost certainly will ask the high court to intervene. The justices are separately hearing a major challenge to abortion rights in a case from Mississippi that could dramatically curtail a woman's right to an abortion in roughly half the states. But that case, being argued in December, won't be decided until next spring.

In the meantime, *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the court's two most significant abortion rulings, remain in effect.

The administration said it was suing Texas because its law is clearly unconstitutional under those rulings. What's more, the administration argued, Texas lawmakers wrote it in a way to evade early federal court challenges. Private citizens, not the state, have the power to enforce the law through civil lawsuits from which they can receive \$10,000 a suit.

Federal government lawsuits against a state are not common, and when they occur as they sometimes do in the area of voting rights, they usually are based on a provision of federal law explicitly authorizing the Justice Department to sue. In his ruling Pitman laid out point by point why he felt the federal government had a claim in the case and therefore standing to file the lawsuit. The question is whether his reasoning will hold in higher courts.

There's no such federal law addressing the current situation, but then the Texas provision is itself unusual. "It does feel novel for the federal government to sue a state on this relatively diffuse basis," said University of Notre Dame law professor Samuel Bray. "But novel things happen. The way the Texas statute is set up is novel. Novel serve, novel return."

Brigitte Amari, the deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union's reproductive rights project, said the Texas law is unlike anything she's seen in more than 20 years of abortion rights work.

The fact that Texas had been able to end most abortions in the state even under the current legal framework "shows how uniquely cruel the law is and does create this very unique situation for the federal government to step in," Amari said.

In pressing the state's appeal, Attorney General Ken Paxton said on Twitter: "The sanctity of human life is, and will always be, a top priority for me."

The administration's intervention is not the only aspect of the case Texas is likely to challenge on appeal, legal experts said. Pitman ordered all Texas state judges and county clerks who might handle the citizen lawsuits to refrain from doing so.

"Typically, a judge tells an attorney general or law enforcement folks you can't enforce it. Here, this law is written in a way that bars the state from enforcing it. The question is whether you can preemptively issue an order to other courts saying they're not allowed to hear these cases," said Jonathan Adler, a law professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Adler said past Supreme Court decisions don't provide a clear answer.

Pitman said he had another reason for siding with the administration, to prevent copycat laws in other states. Pitman wrote that "any number of states could enact legislation that deprives citizens of their constitutional rights, with no legal remedy to challenge that deprivation, without the concern that a federal court would enter an injunction."

The reprieve for abortion providers may only be temporary and is itself not without risk, said Columbia

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 37 of 78

University law professor Carol Sanger, who has written about abortion.

Sanger pointed to a section of Texas' law that makes doctors fear they could still be sued for providing abortions without a more permanent legal decision in place. And she said that could mean even if Pitman's decision were to stay in place for some length of time, some providers may not resume the abortions they were providing before the law went into effect. On Thursday, with Pitman's order in place, abortions resumed at some clinics, but other doctors across the state did not rush to resume normal operations.

Even if it is eventually struck down, the Texas law could have the same effect as a previous Texas abortion clinic law that was later overturned by the Supreme Court, a drop in the number of abortion clinics in Texas. There were more than 40 abortion clinics in Texas when the earlier law took effect. Twenty clinics remain.

\_\_\_ Associated Press reporter Jessica Gresko contributed to this report.

## **EXPLAINER: What's behind changes in student loan forgiveness**

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

A student debt forgiveness program with notoriously complex eligibility rules is getting an overhaul from the Biden administration, with the intent of extending debt relief to thousands of public workers.

The Education Department announced Wednesday that it will lift some rules for Public Service Loan Forgiveness while it works on permanent improvements through a rulemaking process. The action will immediately make 22,000 workers eligible for loan cancellation estimated at \$1.7 billion, and it will push more than 500,000 closer to debt relief.

Here are some questions and answers about the program and its overhaul:

### WHAT IS PSLF?

Public Service Loan Forgiveness, known as PSLF, is a program created by Congress in 2007 to encourage more college graduates to pursue careers in public service. It promised that if employees of governments or nonprofit groups made 10 years of monthly payments on their federal student loans, the remainder would be canceled.

It's open to a variety of workers at any level of government or any nonprofit, from teachers and postal workers to police officers and members of the military.

But there are additional eligibility rules that weren't always made obvious to borrowers.

### WHO'S ELIGIBLE AND WHO ISN'T?

Under the original rules, borrowers with certain types of loans were ineligible, including those from a now-defunct program that issued federally backed student loans through banks. Those loans, known as Federal Family Education Loans, were the most common kind when the program was created, and more than 10 million Americans are still paying them off.

Some repayment plans offered by the federal government were also ineligible, and any payments made while billing was paused through forbearance or deferment did not count toward the required 120 monthly payments. Payments that were late or not paid in full were not counted.

If borrowers met all the conditions and made 120 payments that were certified by an eligible employer, then they could apply to have the rest of their debt canceled.

### WHERE'S THE PROBLEM?

When borrowers started submitting applications in 2017, it became clear there was widespread confusion. The vast majority of requests were denied, often because applicants had the wrong type of loan or repayment plan.

Some borrowers said the rules were never made clear, while some said they were misled by loan servicers who work on behalf of the federal government.

Despite past attempts to repair the program, problems have persisted. To date, only 5,500 borrowers have had loans cleared through the program, totaling \$453 million in relief.

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

For a limited time, the Education Department said payments that were previously ineligible can now be counted toward the required 120. Borrowers can get credit for those payments if they apply for loan forgive-

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 38 of 78

ness by Oct. 31, 2022, and as long as they were working in eligible jobs when the payments were made. But there are two big caveats.

Borrowers with FFEL loans — the ones issued by banks — must get their student debt consolidated into new loans under the existing federal loan system. That can be done through October 2022. And although all loans taken out directly by students can now be counted, those taken out by parents through the Parent PLUS program remain ineligible.

Along with expanding payment eligibility, the Education Department is making other changes to address past problems.

Starting next year, federal workers and military members will no longer need to get their employment certified to prove they worked in public service while making their payments. Instead, the department will automatically keep track of their payments using existing federal data.

The department will also create a process to review applications for errors and to allow borrowers to appeal decisions.

## WHY IS IT TEMPORARY?

To bend the program's rules, the Education Department is invoking the HEROES Act of 2003, a federal law that allows the agency to waive certain rules during a national emergency. The department is tying its action to the pandemic, which has been declared a national emergency, but the department said it will lose that flexibility after October 2022.

Democrats applauded the move, while Republicans said the Biden administration is overstepping its authority. Republicans agree that the program needs to be improved, but they say it should be done by Congress, not executive power.

Groups that represent student borrowers say the changes are long overdue. Seth Frotman, executive director of the Student Borrower Protection Center, said the update is good news for millions of workers.

"For too long, those who give the most to our communities and our country have been given the run-around and forced to shoulder debts that should have been canceled," he said in a statement. "The Biden administration is taking a critical step towards alleviating that burden for our public service workers."

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The Biden administration has vowed to make permanent improvements to PSLF through a federal rule-making process. Hearings for that process started this week, with the potential to bring big change to student aid programs.

The Education Department said it's exploring a variety of changes, including possible partnerships with employers, to make it easier for public servants to apply for loan forgiveness.

Any changes are unlikely to come quickly, though — the rulemaking process can be slow and it sometimes takes years to put changes into effect.

## Trump-backed candidates face scrutiny after minimal vetting

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — One has been accused of assaulting another White House aide. Another allegedly threatened his ex-wife's life, exaggerated claims of financial success and alarmed business associates with his erratic behavior. A third has asked a judge to keep past protection-from-abuse orders sealed.

As former President Donald Trump wades into contested primaries across the country, he's trying to exact revenge and remake the Republican Party in his image. In doing so, he has endorsed a series of candidates involved in allegations of wrongdoing, especially concerning their treatment of women.

That's contributing to anxiety among some Republicans who worry that Trump is lending his powerful political backing only to those who flatter his ego. Such candidates may be able to win GOP primaries in which the party's Trump-supporting base dominates, only to struggle in the general election.

And with control of Congress hinging on just a few seats, such missteps could be costly.

"There is no vetting process — at least not on policy and electability," said Dan Eberhart, a GOP donor and Trump supporter who said the concerns extend to many corners of the party. "The endorsement

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 39 of 78

process comes down to how much a candidate supports the former president and is willing to have the Trump machine run their campaign and fundraising. ... Whether they are the most viable candidate in a given race is secondary."

The former president has little reason to be blindsided by the allegations facing some of the candidates he's endorsed. Some details would have turned up in basic background checks similar to those required by many employers. Others were said to have been shared with Trump personally or circulated within GOP circles well before he made his endorsements.

In her new book, "I'll Take Your Questions Now: What I Saw at the Trump White House," Stephanie Grisham, the former White House press secretary and chief of staff to first lady Melania Trump, accuses her ex-boyfriend of growing abusive as their relationship deteriorated. The ex-boyfriend, Max Miller, was a fellow White House aide and is now running for Congress in Ohio with Trump's enthusiastic blessing.

Miller has adamantly denied the charges and on Wednesday filed a defamation suit accusing Grisham of sullying his name.

Grisham says she told the former president and first lady before Miller announced his candidacy about the abuse but wrote in a Washington Post op-ed that they "didn't seem to care." Trump endorsed Miller as an act of revenge against Rep. Anthony Gonzalez, one of 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach him over the Jan. 6 insurrection.

"A White House staffer accused of assault by a woman whom the president knew and trusted? It didn't even seem to register on the president's radar screen as a concern. To the contrary, knowing what he knows, Trump has endorsed my ex's bid for Congress," she wrote.

Trump has a long history of siding with powerful men accused of hurting women, from his Supreme Court pick Brett Kavanaugh to former Fox News host Bill O'Reilly. He defended a former White House aide who resigned after allegations that he was physically and emotionally abusive to two ex-wives became public. And in 2017, he backed GOP Senate candidate Roy Moore despite allegations that Moore had sexually assaulted teen girls decades ago when he was in his 30s.

Trump himself has been accused of sexual misconduct by more than two dozen women but he, like the other men he has defended, has always vigorously denied the allegations.

Still, the former president and his associates occasionally draw the line.

Last week, Trump cut ties with his former campaign manager and longtime adviser Corey Lewandowski after a donor alleged Lewandowski made repeated unwanted sexual advances as a fundraising event. During the 2016 campaign, Trump had defended Lewandowski after he was accused of forcefully grabbing a reporter by the arm and faced a battery charge, which was dropped. Lewandowski denied wrongdoing in both cases.

But more often than not, an allegation of wrongdoing hasn't stopped the former president from offering his endorsement.

Trump last month threw his support behind football great Herschel Walker, a longtime friend, for an open Senate seat in Georgia, a race the former president had urged Walker to enter. That endorsement came more than a month after an Associated Press review of hundreds of pages of public records tied to Walker's business ventures and his divorce uncovered accusations that Walker repeatedly threatened to kill his ex-wife and her new boyfriend and exaggerated his business success, among other things.

Walker's campaign has generally avoided responding to specifics, but has cited the ex-NFL star's mental health issues, which he has discussed in detail, including in a book.

And in Pennsylvania, Trump's chosen candidate for an open Senate seat, Sean Parnell, has faced questions from rival Jeff Bartos over restraining orders sought by his wife in 2017 and 2018 during divorce proceedings. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported Wednesday that he had asked a judge "to ban his wife and her attorney from talking publicly about past protection-from-abuse orders against him."

Parnell notes the orders are not evidence of wrongdoing. But Bartos has tried to make the issue a liability and warned it could damage Parnell in a general election, potentially costing Republicans the seat.

Trump spokesperson Taylor Budowich did not respond to specific questions about what Trump knew of

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 40 of 78

the allegations, but defended the former president's choices and instead blamed journalists.

"President Trump continues to pick strong fighters who will advance his America First agenda," he said. "However, we are no strangers to the depths the fake news is willing to fall in order to smear honorable patriots with false allegations."

But even some allies of the former president worry the haphazard nature of his endorsement process leaves him open to potential embarrassment and risks checkering an endorsement record he takes pride in. Some have advised that he be more judicious and endorse in fewer races, even as he basks in the attention showered on him by candidates jockeying for his seal of approval, still seen as a golden ticket in many districts where he remains the party's biggest star.

For candidates who seek Trump's backing, there's some degree of process.

Candidates can make contact with Trump's team via an email address that was set up to sift through incoming endorsement requests. Trump interviews the candidates personally, and aides check up on their past statements and try to determine whether they share his policy priorities, which have come to include their position on election audits and how vigorously they supported the baseless effort to overturn the 2020 results.

But there is no system in place that would, for instance, turn up arrest records for drunk driving or property tax liens. And, as always with Trump, decisions are often shaped by what he sees on TV, by gossip, and by those who have his ear at the time, including some who may be working for endorsement-seeking candidates.

Still, Trump allies note he generally has a good read on the GOP base. And even though someone like Walker may come with baggage, he also has sky-high name recognition, huge fundraising potential and is more likely to get Trump's help than someone who may look good on paper but that the former president isn't excited about.

"He's going to be unpredictable. He wouldn't want it any other way. That's kind of his M.O., his brand, his DNA politically," said veteran Georgia GOP strategist Chip Lake.

But endorsing in so many races carries risks for Trump personally, Lake noted.

"What it means is you're going to win some and lose some," he said. "And I suspect he's going to win a lot more than he's going to lose. But he'll lose some, too."

## **New FDA chief can't come soon enough for beleaguered agency**

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Straining under a pandemic workload and battered by a string of public controversies, one of the leading agencies in the government's fight against COVID-19 is finally on the verge of getting a new commissioner.

After nearly nine months of searching, President Joe Biden says he's close to naming his choice to lead the Food and Drug Administration, which oversees vaccines, drugs and tests. Former FDA officials and other experts say the decision cannot come soon enough for the agency's beleaguered regulators.

Thousands of FDA staffers are exhausted after racing for more than a year and a half to review products to battle the coronavirus, and the agency's reputation for rigorous, science-based regulation has been threatened by contentious disputes over COVID-19 booster shots and an unproven new Alzheimer's drug.

"The FDA is under a cloud like we've never seen before," said Lawrence Gostin, a public health specialist at Georgetown University. "The choice of a commissioner is going to be absolutely essential for a vibrant future for the agency."

The pressure comes as the FDA faces more coronavirus-related decisions that are likely to affect tens of millions of Americans and determine how the nation fares against future waves of infection.

In the coming weeks, the agency will decide on the scope of booster shots for adults who received the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Regulators will also rule on whether Pfizer's vaccine is safe and effective for children as young as 5.

That comes atop other high-stakes decisions, including whether to ban e-cigarettes from vaping giant



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 41 of 78

Juul and other manufacturers due to their risks to teens.

The FDA role was expected to be one of Biden's first nominations earlier this year, given the urgency of the pandemic. But the agency's longtime drug director, Dr. Janet Woodcock, has been serving as acting commissioner since January. The White House faces a legal deadline of mid-November to name a replacement.

Administration officials said Biden will make a decision before Nov. 15.

Acting agency heads serve mainly as caretakers and generally cannot set new goals or priorities for their agencies. They also have less influence to resolve turmoil between agency staff and political decision makers at higher levels of government.

That issue came into sharp focus last month when two longtime FDA vaccine regulators publicly opposed the Biden administration's plan to give boosters to most healthy Americans. Both said they would retire from the agency.

There was a sense within the FDA that the White House's call for a massive booster campaign beginning Sept. 20 had effectively boxed the agency into a decision before its scientists had completed their own review of whether extra shots were needed. Ultimately, the agency authorized scaled-back use of Pfizer's shot to boost protection in older adults and other vulnerable groups.

Experts say the incoming FDA commissioner will need to ease burnout, boost morale and repair the agency's public credibility.

The nomination of a new commissioner "should have been settled by now," said Dr. Stephen Ostroff, a former FDA acting commissioner and chief scientist. "I just wish they would get someone in there to get things moving and to be the public face of the agency so people understand what is going on at FDA and why."

The monthslong search for an FDA nominee reflects the increasingly political nature of the job and the limited pool of candidates who are both qualified and interested in taking it on.

Headquartered in the Maryland suburbs outside Washington, the FDA is often cited as regulating products that make up 25% of U.S. consumer spending. At the center of this sprawling bureaucracy, the FDA commissioner is subject to pressure from the White House, members of Congress, corporate lobbyists, consumer advocates and medical groups. The most successful commissioners have tended to combine deep expertise in medicine and health policy with keen political and communication skills.

More than a half-dozen names have been floated for the position since Biden took office.

Former FDA Deputy Commissioner Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, the agency's No. 2 official in the early Obama administration, was an early favorite among medical experts and consumer advocates. But he is opposed by many of the powerful industries that the FDA regulates, including the pharmaceutical lobby.

Dr. Michelle McMurry-Heath, who also worked at the FDA under Obama, has also reportedly been vetted for the job. But her current role heading the biotech industry's top lobbying group puts her at odds with several key Biden priorities, including lower drug pricing.

For months, Woodcock was expected to be nominated, given her popularity among FDA staff and the drug industry. But several key Democratic senators have signaled they would oppose her confirmation due to the FDA's handling of addictive opioid painkillers like OxyContin under her watch.

The FDA commissioner must be confirmed by a Senate majority vote.

As the agency's authorities have expanded, so have the political and legal fault lines. For instance, a 2009 law giving the FDA oversight of tobacco products resulted in more than a decade of ongoing legal battles over menthol cigarettes, flavored e-cigarettes and other products the agency is trying to regulate.

That's on top of perennial controversies surrounding drug safety problems and food recalls.

"People who are being considered for the job have to ask themselves: 'Will I emerge with an enhanced reputation, or will I have a reputation that puts me in the middle of controversy?'" said Wayne Pines, a former FDA associate commissioner and communications specialist who has helped several commissioners through the confirmation process.

Most FDA commissioners over the last three decades have held the job for less than two years.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 42 of 78

Dr. Stephen Hahn was commissioner for just 13 months under former President Donald Trump, who repeatedly threatened the agency to speed up reviews of COVID-19 vaccines and to clear unproven treatments, such as the discredited drug hydroxychloroquine.

The strain on the FDA was supposed to ease under Biden. But the White House's full-court press for booster shots set off alarms among some at the agency that this administration was also getting ahead of the science. Administration allies have defended the aggressive preparation for the boosters, stressing that the plan always depended on signoff from FDA scientists.

Other controversies facing the FDA stem from its own decisions.

The June approval of an expensive new Alzheimer's drug quickly sparked controversy given that the agency's own expert advisers had nearly unanimously rejected the drug's purported benefits.

Two congressional committees and a federal inspector general are now investigating the decision after revelations that agency reviewers held undocumented meetings with executives from drugmaker Biogen in the run-up to the approval.

The contacts seemed to confirm longstanding worries that the agency is more a confidant to the drug industry than a regulator. Three FDA advisers resigned over the approval.

Given the controversies confronting the agency, the Biden nominee will need to have "a huge amount of scientific heft and credibility," Gostin said.

"That will be important for the morale of FDA career scientists, but it will be even more important for the integrity of the agency and the public's trust in FDA."

---

Associated Press Writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

---

Follow Matthew Perrone on Twitter at [https://twitter.com/AP\\_FDawriter](https://twitter.com/AP_FDawriter)

---

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## US hiring may have risen last month in a sign of resilience

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's employers may have stepped up their hiring last month after a slow-down in August. But COVID-19's fingerprints will likely still be found on the September jobs report being released Friday.

Economists have forecast that employers added 488,000 jobs last month, according to data provider FactSet. That's about half the gains in both June and July, when a sharp drop in new infections spurred more traveling, shopping and spending, but well above August's sluggish growth of 235,000 jobs. The unemployment rate is expected to have dropped from 5.2% to 5.1%.

During August, the delta variant caused a sharp pullback in hiring among restaurants, bars, hotels and retail stores, when Americans were reluctant to visit restaurants, bars and shops. Those trends likely remained a factor in September but might have improved as confirmed COVID cases began declining in recent weeks.

A big question surrounding the September hiring report is whether employers managed to find enough people to fill a record-high number of open jobs. As the spread of vaccinations accelerated earlier this year and more Americans ventured out, companies were caught flat-footed as customer demand soared much faster than they expected. At the same time, many of their former employees had dropped out of the job market to care for children at home or because higher stock prices and home values allowed older workers to retire early.

The demand for workers remains intense: The employment website Indeed says the number of job postings, which was flat in August compared with July, rose again last month, particularly for warehouse jobs and positions in human resources.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 43 of 78

Yet to an extent that has surprised economists, many people who lost or quit their jobs during the pandemic recession have yet to look for work again. People out of work aren't counted as unemployed by the government unless they're actively searching for jobs.

Expectations that more applicants would flow into the job market in September as schools reopened and federal unemployment benefits ended have dimmed. A key reason is that coronavirus cases stemming from the delta variant remain high, although the pace of confirmed infections has slowed.

Several enhanced unemployment benefits ended in early September, including a \$300-a-week federal supplement as well as programs that, for the first time, covered gig workers and people who were jobless for six months or more. So far, the ending of those programs appears to have had only a small effect on the number of people seeking work.

Governors in about 25 states ended the \$300 benefit before the nationwide expiration in September. Research by economists at Goldman Sachs found that unemployed people who were looking for work were much more likely to take jobs when their benefits ended. But the early cut-offs did not cause people on the sidelines to start searching again, Goldman concluded.

Most recent economic data suggest that the economy has been more resilient during the delta outbreak than during earlier COVID waves. Americans spent more money in August, though a big chunk of their spending shifted online.

At the same time, much of that spending reflected higher inflation, which has jumped as supply chain bottlenecks have raised the price of new cars, furniture and many electronics and appliances. Most economists forecast that the economy grew at an inflation-adjusted annual rate of 3% or even less in the July-September quarter, down from 6.7% in the preceding three months. Most still expect a bounce-back in the final three months of the year.

There are signs that hiring picked up later in September, which might not be captured in Friday's report. That's because the government compiles its data from surveys that covered the week that ended Sept. 18.

Applications for unemployment benefits fell in the final week of September for the first time in four weeks, the government said Thursday, evidence that job cuts have slowed.

Dave Gilbertson, vice president of UKG, a human resources software company, said that hiring appeared to pick up in the second half of last month as declines in delta cases became more pronounced. UKG tracks shifts worked by hourly employees at its 35,000 member companies.

Their data has pointed to steady improvement in the job market from mid-August, when it reached a low point for the summer, through the end of that month and all through September.

"It's a trajectory that says we are recovering," Gilbertson said.

## Abortions resume in some Texas clinics after judge halts law

By PAUL J. WEBER and JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Abortions quickly resumed in at least six Texas clinics after a federal judge halted the most restrictive abortion law in the U.S., but other physicians remained hesitant, afraid the court order would not stand for long and thrust them back into legal jeopardy.

It was unclear how many abortions Texas clinics rushed to perform Thursday after U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman suspended the law known as Senate Bill 8, which since early September had banned abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks.

Prior to the blistering 113-page order late Wednesday, other courts had declined to stop the law, which bans abortions before some women even know they are pregnant.

"There's actually hope from patients and from staff, and I think there's a little desperation in that hope," said Amy Hagstrom Miller, president of Whole Woman's Health, which operates four clinics in Texas. She said some of those clinics performed abortions Thursday but did not reveal how many.

"Folks know this opportunity could be short-lived," she said.

By all accounts, the ruling did not usher in a fast return to normal in Texas.

At least six Texas clinics resumed abortion services Thursday or were gearing up to offer them again,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 44 of 78

said Kelly Krause, spokeswoman for the Center for Reproductive Rights. There were roughly two dozen abortion clinics in Texas before the law took effect Sept. 1.

Planned Parenthood, the state's largest abortion provider, did not say Thursday whether it had resumed abortions, stressing the ongoing uncertainty and the possibility of an appeals court quickly reinstating the law in the coming days. Fund Choice Texas, which covers travel expenses for women seeking abortions, was still receiving a high volume of calls Thursday from patients needing help to make out-of-state appointments.

The 20 calls were about the normal volume over the past month, executive director Anna Rupani said. She said her organization — which has helped Texas women travel as far away as Seattle and Los Angeles — was still discussing whether it would help a patient get an abortion in Texas even with a court injunction in place.

The Texas law leaves enforcement solely up to private citizens, who are entitled to collect \$10,000 in damages if they bring successful lawsuits against not just abortion providers who violate the restrictions, but anyone who helps a woman obtain an abortion. Republicans crafted the law in a way designed to also allow retroactive lawsuits if the restrictions are set aside by one court, but later put back in place by another.

"What's really frustrating ... is this law was drafted to create confusion, and this law was drafted to create problems," Rupani said. "It's unfortunate that we have an injunction, and people are still having to understand the legal ramifications of what that means for them."

Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's office has served notice of the state's intent to appeal but had yet to do so Thursday.

"We are confident that the appellate courts will agree that every child with a heartbeat should have a chance at life," said Renae Eze, a spokeswoman for Republican Gov. Greg Abbott, who signed the law in May.

Hagstrom Miller said her Texas clinics called in some patients early Thursday who were on a list in case the law was blocked at some point. Other appointments were being scheduled for the days ahead, and phone lines were again busy. But some of the clinics' 17 physicians were still declining to perform abortions, fearful they might be held liable despite the judge's order.

Pitman's order amounted to the first legal blow to Senate Bill 8, which had withstood a wave of earlier challenges. In the weeks since the restrictions took effect, Texas abortion providers said the impact had been "exactly what we feared."

In the opinion, Pitman took Texas to task, saying Republican lawmakers had "contrived an unprecedented and transparent statutory scheme" by trying to evade judicial review.

"From the moment S.B. 8 went into effect, women have been unlawfully prevented from exercising control over their lives in ways that are protected by the Constitution," wrote Pitman, who was appointed to the bench by former President Barack Obama.

"That other courts may find a way to avoid this conclusion is theirs to decide; this Court will not sanction one more day of this offensive deprivation of such an important right."

The lawsuit was brought by the Biden administration, which has said the restrictions were enacted in defiance of the U.S. Constitution. Attorney General Merrick Garland called the order "a victory for women in Texas and for the rule of law."

Abortion providers say their fears have become reality in the short time the law has been in effect. Planned Parenthood says the number of patients from Texas at its clinics in the state decreased by nearly 80% in the two weeks after the law took effect.

Some providers have said Texas clinics are now in danger of closing while neighboring states struggle to keep up with a surge of patients who must drive hundreds of miles for an abortion. Other women, they say, are being forced to carry pregnancies to term.

How many abortions have been performed in Texas since the law took effect is unknown. State health officials say additional reporting requirements under the law will not make September data available on its website until early next year.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 45 of 78

Other states, mostly in the South, have passed similar laws that ban abortion within the early weeks of pregnancy, all of which judges have blocked. A 1992 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court prevented states from banning abortion before viability, the point at which a fetus can survive outside the womb, around 24 weeks of pregnancy.

But Texas' version had so far outmaneuvered the courts because it leaves enforcement to private citizens to file suits, not prosecutors, which critics say amounts to a bounty.

The Texas law is just one that has set up the biggest test of abortion rights in the U.S. in decades, and it is part of a broader push by Republicans nationwide to impose new restrictions on abortion.

On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court began a new term, which in December will include arguments in Mississippi's bid to overturn 1973's landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision guaranteeing a woman's right to an abortion.

Last month, the court did not rule on the constitutionality of the Texas law in allowing it to remain in place. But abortion providers took that 5-4 vote as an ominous sign about where the court might be heading on abortion after its conservative majority was fortified with three appointees of former President Donald Trump.

Stengle contributed from Dallas.

## Senate dodges US debt disaster, voting to extend borrowing

By KEVIN FREKING, ALAN FRAM and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate dodged a U.S. debt disaster Thursday night, voting to extend the government's borrowing authority into December and temporarily avert an unprecedented federal default that experts warned would devastate the economy and harm millions of Americans.

The party-line Democratic vote of 50-48 in support of the bill to raise the government's debt ceiling by nearly a half-trillion dollars brought instant relief in Washington and far beyond. However, it provides only a reprieve. Assuming the House goes along, which it will, Republican and Democratic lawmakers will still have to tackle their deep differences on the issue once more before yearend.

That debate will take place as lawmakers also work to fund the federal government for the new fiscal year and as they keep up their bitter battling over President Joe Biden's top domestic priorities — a bipartisan infrastructure plan with nearly \$550 billion in new spending as well as a much more expansive, \$3.5 trillion effort focused on health, safety net programs and the environment.

Easing the crisis at hand — a disastrous default looming in just weeks — the Republican Senate leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, offered his support for allowing a short-term extension of the government's borrowing authority after leading solid GOP opposition to a longer extension. He acted as Biden and business leaders ramped up their concerns that a default would disrupt government payments to millions of Americans and throw the nation into recession.

The GOP concession to give up its blockade for now was not popular with some members of McConnell's Republican caucus, who complained that the nation's debt levels are unsustainable.

"I can't vote to raise this debt ceiling, not right now, especially given the plans at play to increase spending immediately by another \$3.5 trillion," Sen. Mike Lee of Utah said shortly before the vote.

Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas said the Democrats had been on "a path to surrender" on the process used to lift the debt cap, "and then unfortunately, yesterday, Republicans blinked."

But Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska was among those voting to end debate and allow a vote on the bill.

"I'm not willing to let this train go off the cliff," she said.

Eleven Republicans voted to end debate, providing the threshold needed to move the bill to a final vote. However, no Republicans sided with Democrats in the final vote for the measure. McConnell has insisted that the majority party will have to increase the debt ceiling on its own.

Congress has just days to act before the Oct. 18 deadline after which the Treasury Department has warned it will quickly run short of funds to handle the nation's already accrued debt load.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 46 of 78

The House is likely to approve the measure next week. After the Senate action, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer announced the House is being called back to session Tuesday evening for votes.

Republican leaders worked through the day to find the 10 votes they needed from their party to advance the debt limit extension to a final vote, holding a private huddle late in the afternoon. It was a long and "spirited" discussion in the room, said Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri.

McConnell allowed for an airing of all views and ultimately told the senators he would be voting yes to limit debate.

The vote started with McConnell and South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the second-ranking Republican, waiting patiently as slowly, but surely, nine of their GOP colleagues came and gave the anticipated thumbs up. When Cruz voted no, McConnell joked: "I thought you were undecided. Thanks for showing up."

The White House signaled Biden's support, with principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre saying the president would sign a bill to raise the debt limit when it passed Congress. Jabbing the Republicans, she also said, "It gives us some breathing room from the catastrophic default we were approaching because of Sen. McConnell's decision to play politics with our economy."

Wall Street rallied modestly Thursday on news of the agreement.

The accord sets the stage for a sequel of sorts in December, when Congress will again face pressing deadlines to fund the government and raise the debt limit before heading home for the holidays.

The \$480 billion increase in the debt ceiling is the level that the Treasury Department has said is needed to get safely to Dec. 3.

"I thank my Democratic colleagues for showing unity in solving this Republican-manufactured crisis," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York. "Despite immense opposition from Leader McConnell and members of his conference, our caucus held together and we have pulled our country back from the cliff's edge that Republicans tried to push us over."

McConnell saw it quite differently.

"The pathway our Democratic colleagues have accepted will spare the American people any near-term crisis, while definitively resolving the majority's excuse that they lacked time to address the debt limit through (reconciliation)," McConnell said Thursday. "Now there will be no question: They'll have plenty of time."

McConnell and fellow Senate Republicans still insist that the Democrats go it alone to raise the debt ceiling longer term. Further, McConnell has insisted that Democrats use the same cumbersome legislative process called reconciliation that they used to pass a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill and have been employing to try to pass Biden's \$3.5 trillion measure to boost safety net, health and environmental programs.

On Wednesday, Biden had enlisted top business leaders to push for immediately suspending the debt limit, saying the approaching deadline created the risk of a historic default that would be like a "meteor" that could crush the U.S. economy and send waves of damage worldwide.

At a White House event, the president shamed Republican senators for threatening to filibuster any suspension of the \$28.4 trillion cap. He leaned into the credibility of corporate America — a group that has traditionally been aligned with the GOP on tax and regulatory issues — to drive home his point as the heads of Citi, JP Morgan Chase and Nasdaq gathered in person and virtually to say the debt limit must be lifted.

"It's not right and it's dangerous," Biden said of the resistance by Senate Republicans.

Once a routine matter, raising the debt limit has become politically treacherous over the past decade or more, used by Republicans, in particular, to rail against government spending and the rising debt load.

---

AP writers Lisa Mascaró, Farnoush Amiri and Josh Boak in Washington and AP Business Writer Damian J. Troise in New York contributed to this report.

## Biden to restore 3 national monuments cut by Trump

By MATTHEW DALY and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will restore two sprawling national monuments in Utah that

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 47 of 78

have been at the center of a long-running public lands dispute, and a separate marine conservation area in New England that recently has been used for commercial fishing. Environmental protections at all three monuments had been stripped by former President Donald Trump.

The White House announced the changes Thursday night ahead of a ceremony expected Friday.

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox, a Republican, expressed disappointment in Biden's decision to restore Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante monuments, which the Trump administration downsized significantly in 2017.

The monuments cover vast expanses of southern Utah where red rocks reveal petroglyphs and cliff dwellings and distinctive buttes bulge from a grassy valley. Trump invoked the century-old Antiquities Act to cut 2 million acres (800,000 hectares) from the two monuments, calling restrictions on mining and other energy production a "massive land grab" that "should never have happened."

His actions slashed Bears Ears, on lands considered sacred to Native American tribes, by 85%, to just over 200,000 acres (80,900 hectares). They cut Grand Staircase-Escalante by nearly half, leaving it at about 1 million acres (405,000 hectares). Both monuments were created by Democratic presidents.

The White House said in a statement that Biden was "fulfilling a key promise" to restore the monuments to their full size and "upholding the longstanding principle that America's national parks, monuments and other protected areas are to be protected for all time and for all people."

His actions were among a series of steps the administration has taken to protect public lands and waters, the White House said, including moves to halt oil leasing in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and prevent road-building in the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, the nation's largest federal forest.

Biden's plan also restores protections in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Monument in the Atlantic Ocean, southeast of Cape Cod. Trump had made a rule change to allow commercial fishing at the marine monument, an action that was heralded by fishing groups but derided by environmentalists who pushed Biden and Interior Secretary Deb Haaland to restore protections against fishing.

Protecting the marine monument safeguards "this invaluable area for the fragile species that call it home" and demonstrates the administration's commitment to science, said Jen Felt, ocean campaign director for the Conservation Law Foundation.

Arizona Rep. Raul Grijalva, a Democrat and chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, also praised the Biden administration in a statement, saying restoring the monuments shows its dedication to "conserving our public lands and respecting the voices of Indigenous Peoples."

"It's time to put Trump's cynical actions in the rear-view mirror," Grijalva said.

But Utah's governor called Biden's decision a "tragic missed opportunity." The president's action "fails to provide certainty as well as the funding for law enforcement, research and other protections which the monuments need and which only Congressional action can offer," Cox said in a statement released with other state leaders.

Utah Sen. Mitt Romney also criticized Biden, saying in a tweet the president had "squandered the opportunity to build consensus" and find a permanent solution for the monuments.

"Yet again, Utah's national monuments are being used as a political football between administrations," Romney said Thursday. "The decision to re-expand the boundaries of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante is a devastating blow to our state, local and tribal leaders and our delegation ... today's 'winner take all' mentality moved us further away from that goal."

Jennifer Rokala, executive director of the Center for Western Priorities, a conservation group, also applauded Biden's decision and said she hopes it marks an initial step toward his goal of conserving at least 30% of U.S. lands and ocean by 2030.

"Thank you, President Biden," Rokala said in a statement. "You have listened to Indigenous tribes and the American people and ensured these landscapes will be protected for generations to come."

Trump's cuts ironically increased the national attention to Bears Ears, Rokala said. She called on the federal government to boost funding to manage the landscape and handle growing crowds.

Haaland, the first Indigenous Cabinet secretary, traveled to Utah in April to visit the monuments, becoming the latest federal official to step into what has been a yearslong public lands battle. She submitted her

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 48 of 78

recommendations on the monuments in June.

In a statement Thursday, Haaland said she had the "distinct honor to speak with many people who care deeply about this land" during her Utah trip.

"The historical connection between Indigenous peoples and Bears Ears is undeniable; our Native American ancestors sustained themselves on the landscape since time immemorial, and evidence of their rich lives is everywhere one looks," said Haaland, a member of the Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico.

Former President Barack Obama proclaimed Bears Ears a national monument in 2016, 20 years after former President Bill Clinton moved to protect Grand Staircase-Escalante. Bears Ears was the first site to receive the designation at the specific request of tribes.

The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, which pushed for its restoration, has said the monument's twin buttes are considered a place of worship for many tribes. The group includes the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Pueblo of Zuni and Ute Indian Tribe.

"President Biden did the right thing restoring the Bears Ears National Monument," Shaun Chapoose, coalition member and chairman of the Ute Indian Tribe Business Committee, said in a statement. "For us, the Monument never went away. We will always return to these lands to manage and care for our sacred sites, waters and medicines."

The Trump administration's reductions to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante paved the way for potential coal mining and oil and gas drilling on lands that were previously off-limits. However, activity was limited because of market forces.

Conservative state leaders considered the size of both monuments U.S. government overreach and applauded the reductions.

Environmental, tribal, paleontological and outdoor recreation organizations sued to restore their original boundaries, arguing presidents lack legal authority to change monuments their predecessors created. Meanwhile, Republicans argued Democratic presidents have misused the Antiquities Act signed by President Theodore Roosevelt to designate monuments beyond what's necessary to protect archaeological and cultural resources.

The Biden administration has said the decision to review the monuments was part of an expansive plan to tackle climate change and reverse the Trump administration's "harmful" policies.

Fishing groups opposed both Obama's creation of the ocean monument and the process he used to create it.

"These fishing areas have a way to be managed that is a little bit cumbersome, a little bit time-consuming, but it brings all the stakeholders together," said Patrice McCarron, executive director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association.

Whitehurst reported from Salt Lake City. Associated Press writer Patrick Whittle in Portland, Maine, contributed to this report.

## The AP Interview: Jayapal pushes Biden for \$3T spending bill

By PADMANANDA RAMA and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Washington Rep. Pramila Jayapal, the head of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, says she has pushed President Joe Biden to hold the line and keep his ambitious social spending plan closer to \$3 trillion instead of the \$2 trillion range that he has floated to Democrats in recent days.

Jayapal told The Associated Press in an interview Thursday that she had told Biden that his suggestion for compromise was "too low, and I said that I would really like to be closer to three." The original amount for the package of Democratic initiatives, including expanded child care, health care, education and environmental programs, was \$3.5 trillion.

The Washington state Democrat has emerged as a top negotiator in the talks on Capitol Hill, using the clout of her liberal caucus — and its nearly 100 members — to thwart a group of House moderates who demanded a vote last week on a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill.



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 49 of 78

Biden tacitly endorsed the progressive caucus's strategy last week, insisting that the spending package full of longtime Democratic priorities be linked to infrastructure. But he also floated trimming it back to a range between \$1.9 trillion and \$2.3 trillion, drawing pushback from Jayapal and others.

Jayapal said that the conversation is ongoing and she isn't "drawing any red lines" in the negotiations. A White House spokesman declined to comment on any private conversations.

"The president knows" that progressives are pushing for the higher amount, Jayapal said. "I said it directly to him, I also said to his top aides, and we're going to continue to figure out where we can go."

In only her fifth year in Congress, Jayapal is holding her growing caucus of liberals firmly together, marshaling influence that the left wing of the party hasn't had in years. In doing so, she is hoping to help Biden win passage of his agenda, which includes a slate of social programs that Democrats have desired for decades.

A small group of moderate House Democrats hoped to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill alone and work on the social spending package later. But fearful that moderates would sink the larger bill, Jayapal and her members insisted that the two remain linked. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi abandoned a planned vote on the infrastructure measure after it became clear they lacked support to pass it.

Jayapal says she's "proud of this moment" not only because she is a woman of color at the negotiating table — she emigrated from India at age 16 and became the first Indian-American woman to serve in the House when she was elected in 2016 — but also because her caucus has stayed unified.

"We are fighting for something that will benefit the entire country," she said.

But enactment of Biden's agenda is far from certain. There are bigger obstacles in the Senate, where the support of moderate Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona will be needed for anything to pass. Both want the proposal scaled back.

And while the liberals are fighting for Biden's priorities, their stance risks dividing a party that remained mostly united through Donald Trump's presidency. With thin margins in both the House and Senate, those splits could ultimately leave the party — as Biden told the caucus last week — with nothing.

Some see an echo of the 2010 Tea Party wave. Like the progressives, the conservatives elected that year — who later formed the Freedom Caucus — often withheld their votes to shape the agenda and force concessions from their leadership.

Jayapal rejects those comparisons to the Freedom Caucus, which she says is a "caucus of no." The Congressional Progressive Caucus, she said, "is trying to get things done."

As chairwoman of the Progressive Caucus, Jayapal has proven to be an ambitious foil to the moderates, following the path blazed by liberal icon Bernie Sanders, the Vermont senator and former Democratic presidential candidate who is fighting for the progressive priorities in the Senate.

But Jayapal seems to have another mentor in mind. She recently compared herself to Pelosi, who is renowned for her skill at counting and winning votes. "I am a good vote counter also," Jayapal told reporters amid the negotiations.

"I was an organizer for 20 years before I came to Congress, and I came in on a theory of change that if we really wanted to change politics so that they could work for working people, then we needed to be organizing on the inside," Jayapal told The AP. "And so that's what I've tried to do."

She said she answers texts "at all hours of the night" and has worked to build up a progressive caucus that was "more like a social club" when she first arrived in 2016. The caucus has also worked since Democrats won the House majority in 2018 to work more closely with outside allies.

"We're very, very strategic and coordinated," Jayapal says. "So all of that I think has helped us to become a force, and it's not something that happened overnight. It's something we've been working towards for many years, over the last three years, and we've made incredible progress."

She also credits Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, liberals who ran to the left of Biden, with pushing him to embrace many of the ideas now at the heart of his social spending plan.

"So when the president comes out and says this is my agenda, of course that helps us," Jayapal says. "And we've elected more and more progressive members."

## Elon Musk says Tesla will move HQ from California to Texas

By ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writer

Tesla will relocate its headquarters from Palo Alto, California, to Austin, Texas, though the electric car maker will keep expanding its manufacturing capacity in the Golden State, CEO Elon Musk said Thursday.

Musk, who last year said he was moving to Texas from California, gave no timeline for the move when he addressed shareholders at Tesla's annual meeting.

In the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Musk clashed with San Francisco Bay Area health authorities trying to enforce shelter-in-place orders. At the time, he threatened to relocate Tesla's operations to Texas or Nevada.

On Thursday, however, Musk cited the cost of housing in the Bay Area that has made it tough for many people to become homeowners, translating into long commutes.

"We're taking it as far as possible, but there's a limit how big you can scale it in the Bay Area," he said Thursday. "Just to be clear, though, we will be continuing to expand our activities in California. This is not a matter of leaving California."

Musk stressed he plans to expand the company's factory in Fremont, California, where Tesla's Models S, X, Y and 3 vehicles are built, in hopes of increasing its output by 50%.

The announcement drew cheers and applause from the small audience at Tesla's manufacturing plant in Austin, where Musk delivered his remarks, which were webcast live.

While applauding Tesla's announcement that it will expand production in Fremont, Bay Area business leaders bemoaned the headquarters move as the latest sign of the region's ongoing issues.

"Mr. Musk's announcement highlights yet again the urgency for California to address our housing affordability crisis and the many other challenges that make it so difficult for companies to grow here," said Jim Wunderman, president and CEO of the business advocacy group Bay Area Council.

Last year, tech giant Oracle Corp. decided to move its headquarters from Silicon Valley to Austin, saying the move would give its employees more flexibility about where and how they work. One of Silicon Valley's founding companies, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, has also said it will move to the Houston area.

At Thursday's meeting Musk also touted the company's record vehicle deliveries this year, while noting that global supply-chain disruptions that have led to a shortage of computer chips remain a challenge.

"It looks like we have a good chance of maintaining that into the future," he said. "Basically, if we get the chips, we can do it."

As a result, production of Tesla's angular Cybertruck pickup isn't likely to begin before the end of 2022, Musk said, estimating that the company would reach "volume" production on the vehicle in 2023.

"We should be through our severest supply chain shortages in '23," he said. "I'm optimistic that will be the case."

Tesla said last week that it delivered 241,300 electric vehicles in the third quarter even as it wrestled with the shortage of computer chips that has hit the entire auto industry.

The company's sales from July through September beat Wall Street estimates of 227,000 sales worldwide, according to data provider FactSet.

Third-quarter sales rose 72% over the 140,000 deliveries Tesla made for the same period a year ago.

So far this year, Tesla has sold around 627,300 vehicles. That puts it on pace to soundly beat last year's total of 499,550.

## How much oil leaked in California spill? No firm tally

By AMY TAXIN Associated Press

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Nearly a week since oil first appeared in the waters off Southern California, how much oil leaked from a ruptured underwater pipeline is still unknown—though experts say the amount should be easy to calculate.

While there isn't a firm tally, plenty of numbers have been floated.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 51 of 78

The company that owns and operates three offshore platforms and the pipeline has said publicly that no more than 126,000 gallons (477,000 liters) leaked. But Houston-based Amplify Energy also told federal investigators the total amount may only be 29,400 gallons (111,300 liters).

On Thursday, U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Rebecca Ore said five federal and state agencies assessed pipeline data and determined that at least about 25,000 gallons (95,000 liters) of crude spilled. No more than 132,000 gallons (500,000 liters) spilled, she said, adding that's a maximum scenario and has not been confirmed.

David Pettit, a senior attorney at Natural Resources Defense Council who worked on the response to the massive Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, said the amount of oil spilled into the ocean should be easily and quickly known to Amplify.

"If they know what the flow rate was in the pipeline, and how much the pressure dropped, and for how long, you could calculate that in a matter of minutes," Pettit said.

"This is money to them," he added. "They know how much they lost, I am certain of that."

Local officials, who feared an environmental catastrophe at first, have more recently voiced hope that the total spillage will be less than initially feared when a putrid smell swept the coast south of Los Angeles last weekend and blobs of crude began washing ashore.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom offered some optimism about the size of the spill when he visited the site on Tuesday. But he cautioned the cleanup still requires massive resources and residents still can't fully use their beloved beaches or swim and surf in the waters in the affected area that stretches about 15 miles (24 kilometers) from Huntington Beach to Laguna Beach.

"You still have the spread, even if it's substantially less gallons, that have to be cleaned up," Newsom said. "So this is going to take time to clean up."

The Coast Guard is investigating whether a ship's anchor might have snagged and bent the pipeline owned by Amplify that shuttles crude from the offshore platforms to a facility on shore in Long Beach. A slit in the pipeline occurred about 5 miles (8 kilometers) offshore at a depth of about 98 feet (30 meters), investigators said.

Officials have been cleaning up the spill by skimming oil off the surface of the ocean, erecting protective booms to keep crude out of sensitive wetland areas and dispatching workers to collect blobs of oil on beaches. So far, they have collected 5,544 gallons (20,986 liters) of crude, according to the Unified Command, which includes federal and state officials and Amplify.

But many say the miles-wide area of oily sheen on the water's surface off the Orange County coast doesn't reveal the spill's size as crude oil may remain beneath. "That is just a hint as to what the volume was," Pettit said. "Most of the stuff is below the surface and looking at the sheen doesn't tell you how deep this stuff is."

Sarah Bedolfe, a marine scientist with ocean advocacy group Oceana, said those responsible for oil spills are on the hook for damages, so early spill estimates tend to be lower than final amounts.

"The industry has a long, documented history of a deficient safety culture and the delays in reporting this spill suggest nothing has changed," she said.

This story has been updated to correct that Gov. Gavin Newsom visited the site on Tuesday, not Wednesday.

## Abortions resume in some Texas clinics after judge halts law

By PAUL J. WEBER and JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Abortions quickly resumed in at least six Texas clinics on Thursday after a federal judge halted the most restrictive abortion law in the U.S., but other physicians remained hesitant, afraid the court order would not stand for long and thrust them back into legal jeopardy.

It was unclear how many abortions Texas clinics rushed to perform in the 24 hours after U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman suspended the law known as Senate Bill 8, which since early September had banned abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 52 of 78

Prior to the blistering 113-page order late Wednesday, other courts had declined to stop the law, which bans abortions before some women even know they are pregnant.

"There's actually hope from patients and from staff, and I think there's a little desperation in that hope," said Amy Hagstrom Miller, president of Whole Woman's Health, which operates four clinics in Texas. She said some of those clinics performed abortions Thursday but did not reveal how many.

"Folks know this opportunity could be short-lived," she said.

By all accounts, the ruling did not usher in a fast return to normal in Texas.

At least six Texas clinics resumed abortion services Thursday or were gearing up to offer them again, said Kelly Krause, spokeswoman for the Center for Reproductive Rights. There were roughly two dozen abortion clinics in Texas before the law took effect Sept. 1.

Planned Parenthood, the state's largest abortion provider, did not say Thursday whether it had resumed abortions, stressing the ongoing uncertainty and the possibility of an appeals court quickly reinstating the law in the coming days. Fund Choice Texas, which covers travel expenses for women seeking abortions, was still receiving a high volume of calls Thursday from patients needing help to make out-of-state appointments.

The 20 calls were about the normal volume over the past month, executive director Anna Rupani said. She said her organization — which has helped Texas women travel as far away as Seattle and Los Angeles — was still discussing whether it would help a patient get an abortion in Texas even with a court injunction in place.

The Texas law leaves enforcement solely up to private citizens, who are entitled to collect \$10,000 in damages if they bring successful lawsuits against not just abortion providers who violate the restrictions, but anyone who helps a woman obtain an abortion. Republicans crafted the law in a way designed to also allow retroactive lawsuits if the restrictions are set aside by one court, but later put back in place by another.

"What's really frustrating ... is this law was drafted to create confusion, and this law was drafted to create problems," Rupani said. "It's unfortunate that we have an injunction, and people are still having to understand the legal ramifications of what that means for them."

Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's office has served notice of the state's intent to appeal but had yet to do so Thursday.

"We are confident that the appellate courts will agree that every child with a heartbeat should have a chance at life," said Renae Eze, a spokeswoman for Republican Gov. Greg Abbott, who signed the law in May.

Hagstrom Miller said her Texas clinics called in some patients early Thursday who were on a list in case the law was blocked at some point. Other appointments were being scheduled for the days ahead, and phone lines were again busy. But some of the clinics' 17 physicians were still declining to perform abortions, fearful they might be held liable despite the judge's order.

Pitman's order amounted to the first legal blow to Senate Bill 8, which had withstood a wave of earlier challenges. In the weeks since the restrictions took effect, Texas abortion providers said the impact had been "exactly what we feared."

In the opinion, Pitman took Texas to task, saying Republican lawmakers had "contrived an unprecedented and transparent statutory scheme" by trying to evade judicial review.

"From the moment S.B. 8 went into effect, women have been unlawfully prevented from exercising control over their lives in ways that are protected by the Constitution," wrote Pitman, who was appointed to the bench by former President Barack Obama.

"That other courts may find a way to avoid this conclusion is theirs to decide; this Court will not sanction one more day of this offensive deprivation of such an important right."

The lawsuit was brought by the Biden administration, which has said the restrictions were enacted in defiance of the U.S. Constitution. Attorney General Merrick Garland called the order "a victory for women in Texas and for the rule of law."

Abortion providers say their fears have become reality in the short time the law has been in effect.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 53 of 78

Planned Parenthood says the number of patients from Texas at its clinics in the state decreased by nearly 80% in the two weeks after the law took effect.

Some providers have said Texas clinics are now in danger of closing while neighboring states struggle to keep up with a surge of patients who must drive hundreds of miles for an abortion. Other women, they say, are being forced to carry pregnancies to term.

How many abortions have been performed in Texas since the law took effect is unknown. State health officials say additional reporting requirements under the law will not make September data available on its website until early next year.

Other states, mostly in the South, have passed similar laws that ban abortion within the early weeks of pregnancy, all of which judges have blocked. A 1992 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court prevented states from banning abortion before viability, the point at which a fetus can survive outside the womb, around 24 weeks of pregnancy.

But Texas' version had so far outmaneuvered the courts because it leaves enforcement to private citizens to file suits, not prosecutors, which critics say amounts to a bounty.

The Texas law is just one that has set up the biggest test of abortion rights in the U.S. in decades, and it is part of a broader push by Republicans nationwide to impose new restrictions on abortion.

On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court began a new term, which in December will include arguments in Mississippi's bid to overturn 1973's landmark Roe v. Wade decision guaranteeing a woman's right to an abortion.

Last month, the court did not rule on the constitutionality of the Texas law in allowing it to remain in place. But abortion providers took that 5-4 vote as an ominous sign about where the court might be heading on abortion after its conservative majority was fortified with three appointees of former President Donald Trump.

Stengle contributed from Dallas.

## **Premier League club Newcastle bought by Saudi sovereign fund**

By ROB HARRIS AP Global Soccer Writer

LONDON (AP) — Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund completed a buyout of Premier League club Newcastle on Thursday, giving hope to fans dreaming of a first title in almost a century but concerning human rights activists that the kingdom had gained a foothold in the world's richest soccer league.

Supporters descended on the club's St. James' Park stadium, some chanting "we are Saudis, we do what we want" and others singing "we've got our club back" amid the promise of long-desired investment.

The 300-million-pound (\$409 million) takeover had been pursued since 2017 but stalled and then collapsed last year over concerns about how much control the Saudi state would have in the running of Newcastle amid scrutiny over piracy of sports broadcasts and human rights violations in the kingdom.

It led to a protracted legal fight that only ended this week when the Public Investment Fund offered assurances to the Premier League that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and in turn the state, would not have any say in the team.

PIF has bought 80% of the club — which is in the relegation zone after seven matches — with the wealthy British-based Reuben brothers and financier Amanda Staveley's PCP Capital Partners owning the rest.

"The big change was the control issue," Staveley told The Associated Press. "We needed to demonstrate there was sufficient separation between PIF and the Saudi state, and that has been determined that there is."

But while the crown prince will not have a place on Newcastle's board of directors, he remains chairman of the PIF. The fund's governor Yasir Al-Rumayyan will be on the board at the northeast English club as non-executive chairman.

"The crown prince is chairman of a lot of entities in Saudi," said Staveley, who will also be on the club's board. "PIF is very much an autonomous, commercially driven investment fund, and it does not operate

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 54 of 78

as part of the wider state. So there is that separation.”

The Premier League’s approval of the new owners and directors means 15 of its clubs are either owned or part-owned by overseas investors.

“All parties have agreed the settlement is necessary to end the long uncertainty for fans over the club’s ownership,” the league said in a statement. “The Premier League has now received legally binding assurances that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will not control Newcastle United Football Club.”

The takeover ends the 14-year ownership by British retail tycoon Mike Ashley, who has been widely viewed as a figure of scorn in the one-club city.

His ownership has been marked by chronic underinvestment in the playing squad, his use of Newcastle as a vehicle to promote his business interests, and of a general lack of ambition despite the club attracting regular home crowds of more than 50,000.

Newcastle has not won a major trophy since the 1955 FA Cup and its last league title was in 1927.

“Newcastle is like a magical, very beautiful, rough diamond,” Staveley said in a telephone interview. “But it needs some nurturing and polishing. But it’s a star.”

With no wins and only three points from seven games, the poor start to the season means the future of manager Steve Bruce will be assessed before the next game next week — at home to Tottenham on Oct. 17 — after the international break.

The club will be seeking a transformation in the same manner enjoyed by Manchester City in 2008 after its takeover by another Middle Eastern entity — Abu Dhabi — that was also brokered by Staveley.

A key impediment to the Newcastle takeover was the pirating of sports broadcasts from Qatari-owned beIN — including of Premier League games — by an entity the World Trade Organization said was facilitated by the Saudi state. The Saudis declared beIN illegal in 2017 as they launched a wider economic and diplomatic boycott of Qatar alongside the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain over accusations Doha supports extremism. The tiny, super-rich nation of Qatar denied the charge and the boycott ended this year.

The Premier League was among the sports organizations that protested against the pirating of its games by the renegade beOutQ operation.

Saudi Arabia is expected to soon lift its ban on beIN, but Staveley said that wasn’t what ended the impasse over the takeover.

“The piracy — those issues had been resolved,” Staveley said. “This debate was just about control for us.”

Newcastle was challenging the Premier League’s decision not to approve the takeover at a Competition Appeals Tribunal whose latest hearing was last week.

But there was a lingering ethical dimension to whether PIF was approved as owners. Amnesty International wrote to league chief executive Richard Masters last year to say the takeover could be exploited by Saudi Arabia to cover up “deeply immoral” breaches of international law, citing human rights violations and the role of the crown prince.

Amnesty raised concerns with Masters about the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul after U.S. intelligence services said they believe the slaying came at the crown prince’s orders. The kingdom has denied that.

“We can understand that this will be seen as a great day by many Newcastle United fans,” Sacha Deshmukh, chief executive of Amnesty International UK, said Thursday. “But it’s also a very worrying day for anyone who cares about the ownership of English football clubs and whether these great clubs are being used to sportswash human rights abuse.

“In our assessment, this deal was always more about sportswashing than it was about football, with Saudi Arabia’s aggressive move into sport as a vehicle for image-management and PR plain for all to see.”

Responding to Amnesty’s complaints, Staveley again tried to create a distinction between PIF and the Saudi leadership despite the funding being from the state fund.

“We understand the concerns,” Staveley said. “And that is why my partner is PIF.”

## Texas judge says abortions can resume, but future uncertain

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Abortions in Texas can resume under a federal judge's ruling late Wednesday, but for how long? A conservative federal appeals court, and ultimately the Supreme Court, might take a more skeptical look at the Biden administration's lawsuit over Texas' six-week abortion ban.

The state law prohibiting abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks, had been in effect for more than a month. U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman temporarily blocked it, in a 113-page ruling that found the law violates a woman's right to an abortion.

But the legal fight over the law at this point isn't focused on abortion rights, but rather on who has the ability to mount a legal challenge to it and what a court can do.

Both the Supreme Court and the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals previously rejected pleas from abortion providers to keep the law from taking effect until courts could definitively rule on its constitutionality. It's not clear how they will rule in the new case or when they might be expected to weigh in.

Texas already has said it will appeal to the 5th Circuit and the loser there almost certainly will ask the high court to intervene. The justices are separately hearing a major challenge to abortion rights in a case from Mississippi that could dramatically curtail a woman's right to an abortion in roughly half the states. But that case, being argued in December, won't be decided until next spring.

In the meantime, *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the court's two most significant abortion rulings, remain in effect.

The administration said it was suing Texas because its law is clearly unconstitutional under those rulings. What's more, the administration argued, Texas lawmakers wrote it in a way to evade early federal court challenges. Private citizens, not the state, have the power to enforce the law through civil lawsuits from which they can receive \$10,000 a suit.

Federal government lawsuits against a state are not common, and when they occur as they sometimes do in the area of voting rights, they usually are based on a provision of federal law explicitly authorizing the Justice Department to sue. In his ruling Pitman laid out point by point why he felt the federal government had a claim in the case and therefore standing to file the lawsuit. The question is whether his reasoning will hold in higher courts.

There's no such federal law addressing the current situation, but then the Texas provision is itself unusual. "It does feel novel for the federal government to sue a state on this relatively diffuse basis," said University of Notre Dame law professor Samuel Bray. "But novel things happen. The way the Texas statute is set up is novel. Novel serve, novel return."

Brigitte Amari, the deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union's reproductive rights project, said the Texas law is unlike anything she's seen in more than 20 years of abortion rights work.

The fact that Texas had been able to end most abortions in the state even under the current legal framework "shows how uniquely cruel the law is and does create this very unique situation for the federal government to step in," Amari said.

In pressing the state's appeal, Attorney General Ken Paxton said on Twitter: "The sanctity of human life is, and will always be, a top priority for me."

The administration's intervention is not the only aspect of the case Texas is likely to challenge on appeal, legal experts said. Pitman ordered all Texas state judges and county clerks who might handle the citizen lawsuits to refrain from doing so.

"Typically, a judge tells an attorney general or law enforcement folks you can't enforce it. Here, this law is written in a way that bars the state from enforcing it. The question is whether you can preemptively issue an order to other courts saying they're not allowed to hear these cases," said Jonathan Adler, a law professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Adler said past Supreme Court decisions don't provide a clear answer.

Pitman said he had another reason for siding with the administration, to prevent copycat laws in other states. Pitman wrote that "any number of states could enact legislation that deprives citizens of their constitutional rights, with no legal remedy to challenge that deprivation, without the concern that a federal

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 56 of 78

court would enter an injunction.”

The reprieve for abortion providers may only be temporary and is itself not without risk, said Columbia University law professor Carol Sanger, who has written about abortion.

Sanger pointed to a section of Texas’ law that makes doctors fear they could still be sued for providing abortions without a more permanent legal decision in place. And she said that could mean even if Pitman’s decision were to stay in place for some length of time, some providers may not resume the abortions they were providing before the law went into effect. On Thursday, with Pitman’s order in place, abortions resumed at some clinics, but other doctors across the state did not rush to resume normal operations.

Even if it is eventually struck down, the Texas law could have the same effect as a previous Texas abortion clinic law that was later overturned by the Supreme Court, a drop in the number of abortion clinics in Texas. There were more than 40 abortion clinics in Texas when the earlier law took effect. Twenty clinics remain.

\_\_\_ Associated Press reporter Jessica Gresko contributed to this report.

## Don’t blame Mrs. O’Leary’s cow for the Great Chicago Fire

By DON BABWIN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago seems to like to pin the blame for its misfortune on farm animals. For decades the Cubs’ failure to get to the World Series was the fault of a goat that was once kicked out of Wrigley Field. And for well over a century, a cow belonging to Mrs. O’Leary caused the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

But just as baseball fans know the Cubs’ pre-2016 shortcomings had nothing to do with a curse put on the team by a goat’s angry owner, historians say there is no evidence that the massive blaze that destroyed a huge swath of Chicago and displaced about a third of its residents began when Catherine O’Leary’s cow kicked over a lantern.

Indeed, nobody puts much stock in that story these days. In 1997, the Chicago City Council went so far as exonerating the cow and its owner.

“The family is still mad about how she was treated,” Peggy Knight, O’Leary’s great-great granddaughter, told The Associated Press on Thursday, a day before the 150th anniversary of the start of the fire. “She did not deserve that.”

How the immigrant from Ireland came to be blamed is a familiar story: She was a victim of prejudice and circumstance.

The fire started in or near her home and her family’s barn. And while it destroyed much of the city, it miraculously spared her own house.

More importantly, O’Leary was easy to blame because of who she was and what she represented.

“Irish immigrants were often considered as the dregs of American society in the 1870s. They were easy targets,” said John Russick, senior vice president of the Chicago History Museum. The museum recently put on its website an interactive exhibit in which visitors can maneuver around a painting of the fire to, among other things, follow its path.

“In the mainstream Yankee press she fit into a whole set of existing prejudices,” said Carl Smith, author of “Chicago’s Great Fire: The Destruction and Resurrection of an Iconic American City.” “She was poor, an immigrant from Ireland, Catholic and a female.”

“The cartoons in the papers made her out to be an Irish drunk,” said Knight.

The shabby treatment made life so unbearable that the family moved to the far southern edge of the city, where they lived under the name of Walsh, Knight said.

The blame continued for years, even though the Chicago Fire Department held a hearing within weeks of the blaze in which it concluded the cause could not be determined.

“She was exonerated and the whole thing kept going,” Knight said.

It picked up speed when in the 1890s, someone added lyrics to the song “Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight” that implicated O’Leary and her cow.

“I call her in my book the fire’s most enduring victim,” said Smith.



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 57 of 78

So how did the fire start?

Smith said that may never be known.

Others, including Knight and Richard Bales, author of "The Great Chicago Fire and the Myth of Mrs. O'Leary's Cow," blame a man named Daniel Sullivan, who was the first to sound the alarm about the blaze.

Knight believes the one-legged horse-cart driver known by everyone at the time as "Peg Leg" Sullivan had been drinking when he accidentally dropped his cigar in the barn.

Bales has researched property records and read transcripts of the Chicago Fire Department's hearing in which both Sullivan and O'Leary testified. Sullivan said he saw the fire from in front of a neighbor's house, but Bales says photographs and housing tract records show his view would have been blocked.

"I am 100% convinced Daniel Sullivan started the fire," he said.

But a mock trial at John Marshall Law School held not long after the City Council's exoneration of O'Leary ended with a jury just as convinced that Sullivan hadn't lied about the events of that night.

It all leads Russick to wonder if the choice of the cow as the culprit has, all along, been the city's way of admitting it doesn't know what happened.

"To some degree blaming the cow is a way to say it was an accident, that in some ways it was a benign way to say nobody was responsible," Russick said.

Then again, he added, "We don't know it was an accident."

## Court says Ronaldo rape lawsuit in Vegas should be dismissed

By KEN RITTER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A federal magistrate judge in Nevada has sided with Cristiano Ronaldo's lawyers against a woman who sued for more than the \$375,000 in hush money she received in 2010 after saying the international soccer star raped her in Las Vegas.

In a scathing recommendation to the judge hearing the case, Magistrate Judge Daniel Albregts on Wednesday blamed Kathryn Mayorga's attorney, Leslie Mark Stovall, for inappropriately basing the civil damages lawsuit on leaked and stolen documents shown to be privileged communications between Ronaldo and his lawyers.

"Dismissing Mayorga's case for the inappropriate conduct of her attorney is a harsh result," the magistrate wrote in his 23-page report to U.S. District Judge Jennifer Dorsey. "But it is, unfortunately, the only appropriate sanction to ensure the integrity of the judicial process."

"Stovall has acted in bad faith to his client's — and his profession's — detriment," Albregts decided.

Stovall and other attorneys in his office did not immediately respond Thursday to telephone and email messages about Albregts's report.

A date for Dorsey to take up the recommendation was not immediately set.

Ronaldo's attorney in Las Vegas, Peter Christiansen, issued a statement calling Ronaldo's legal team "pleased with the court's detailed review ... and its willingness to justly apply the law to the facts and recommend dismissal of the civil case against Mr. Ronaldo."

The Associated Press generally does not name people who say they are victims of sexual assault, but Mayorga gave consent through Stovall and attorney Larissa Drohobyczer to make her name public.

Albregts noted the court did not find that Ronaldo committed a crime and found no evidence his attorneys and representatives "intimidated Mayorga or impeded law enforcement" when Mayorga dropped criminal charges and finalized the \$375,000 confidential settlement in August 2010.

Ronaldo, now 36, is one of the most recognizable and highly paid players in sports. He has captained his home country soccer team, Portugal, and plays for the English Premier League club Manchester United. He spent several years playing in Italy for the Turin-based club Juventus.

Mayorga, 37, is a former teacher and model who lives in the Las Vegas area. She said in her lawsuit filed first in state court and moved to federal court that Ronaldo or his associates violated the confidentiality agreement by allowing reports about it to appear in European publications in 2017. She seeks to collect at least \$200,000 more from Ronaldo.

She met Ronaldo at a nightclub in June 2009 and went with him and other people to his hotel suite, where

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 58 of 78

she said he assaulted her in a bedroom, according to the lawsuit. She was 25 at the time. He was 24.

Ronaldo's attorneys have acknowledged the soccer star and Mayorga had sex, but said it consensual and not rape.

Mayorga went to Las Vegas police, but the investigation was dropped at the time because Mayorga neither identified her alleged attacker by name nor said where the incident took place, Steve Wolfson, the elected prosecutor in Las Vegas, said in 2019.

Wolfson decided not to file criminal charges based on a new investigation by Las Vegas police in 2018 because he said too much time had passed and evidence failed to show that Mayorga's accusation could be proven at trial beyond a reasonable doubt.

Word of the financial settlement became public after the German news outlet Der Spiegel published an article in 2017 titled "Cristiano Ronaldo's Secret" based on documents obtained from "whistleblower portal Football Leaks."

"The article makes it clear that these documents included privileged communications ... between Ronaldo's European and U.S. attorneys about the settlement," Albrechts wrote.

Stovall "acted in bad faith by asking for, receiving, and using the Football Leaks documents to prosecute Mayorga's case," the magistrate judge found.

"Although Stovall never received — or even sought — an ethics opinion ... he had multiple opportunities to recognize the privileged nature of the documents, starting with the 2017 Der Spiegel article, which quotes privileged communications."

Albrechts rejected Stovall's argument that using the documents was justified because Stovall wasn't the one who stole them and he couldn't prove they were stolen.

The attorney's efforts to make confidential documents public through court filings were "audacious," "impertinent" and "abusive," the magistrate said.

Albrechts recommended Dorsey also dismiss Stovall's claim that because Mayorga had learning disabilities as a child and was pressured by Ronaldo's representatives she lacked the mental capacity to sign the 2010 confidentiality agreement.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled early this year that it would be up to Dorsey to decide that question.

"Mayorga's case against Ronaldo would probably not exist had Stovall not asked for the Football Leaks documents," Albrechts wrote, and Mayorga's knowledge of the documents' contents "cannot be undone."

"There is no possible way for this case to proceed where the court cannot tell what arguments and testimony are based on these privileged documents," he said.

## Tanzanian Abdulrazak Gurnah awarded Nobel literature prize

By DAVID KEYTON, JILL LAWLESS and CARA ANNA Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — U.K.-based Tanzanian writer Abdulrazak Gurnah, whose experience of crossing continents and cultures has nurtured his novels about the impact of migration on individuals and societies, won the Nobel Prize for Literature on Thursday.

The Swedish Academy said the award was in recognition of Gurnah's "uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee."

Gurnah, who recently retired as a professor of English and post-colonial literatures at the University of Kent, got the call from the Swedish Academy in the kitchen of his home in Canterbury, in southeast England — and initially thought it was a prank.

"You think it can't be true," he told The Associated Press. "It literally took my breath away."

Gurnah, 72, arrived in Britain as an 18-year-old refugee a half-century ago. He said the themes of migration and displacement explored in his novels are even more urgent now — amid mass movements of people displaced from Syria, Afghanistan and beyond — than when he began his writing career.

"The scale is different," he said. "What makes it different, I think, is what we see in the way that people risk their lives. Of course, people risked their lives from Haiti coming to the United States a couple of

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 59 of 78

decades ago, and that was horrible.”

But in more recent years, the vast numbers of asylum seekers perilously crossing the Mediterranean or the Sahara, he said, are “a different scale of horror.

He said he hoped fiction could help people in wealthy nations understand the humanity of the migrants they see on their screens.

“What fiction can do is it can fill in the gaps,” he said. “And actually allow people to see that, in fact, they are complicated stories which are being mashed up by the high-sounding lies and distortions that seem to be what popular culture somehow requires to continue to ignore and to dismiss what they don’t want to hear.”

Born in 1948 on the island of Zanzibar, now part of Tanzania, Gurnah moved to Britain in the late 1960s, fleeing a repressive regime that persecuted the Arab Muslim community to which he belonged.

He has said he “stumbled into” writing after arriving in England as a way of exploring both the loss and liberation of the emigrant experience.

Gurnah is the author of 10 novels, including “Memory of Departure,” “Pilgrims Way,” “Paradise” — short-listed for the Booker Prize in 1994 — “By the Sea,” “Desertion” and “Afterlives.” The settings range from East Africa under German colonialism to modern-day England. Many explore what he has called “one of the stories of our times”: the profound impact of migration both on uprooted people and the places they make their new homes.

Gurnah, whose native language is Swahili but who writes in English, is only the sixth Africa-born author to be awarded the Nobel for literature, which has been dominated by European and North American writers since it was founded in 1901.

Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka, who won the Nobel Literature prize in 1986, welcomed the latest African Nobel laureate as proof that “the Arts — and literature in particular — are well and thriving, a sturdy flag waved above depressing actualities” in “a continent in permanent travail.”

“May the tribe increase!” Soyinka told the AP in an email.

Anders Olsson, chairman of the Nobel Committee for literature, called Gurnah “one of the world’s most prominent post-colonial writers.” He said it was significant that Gurnah’s roots are in Zanzibar, a polyglot place that “was cosmopolitan long before globalization.”

“His work gives us a vivid and very precise picture of another Africa not so well known for many readers, a coastal area in and around the Indian Ocean marked by slavery and shifting forms of repression under different regimes and colonial powers: Portuguese, Indian, Arab, German and the British,” Olsson said.

He said Gurnah’s characters “find themselves in the gulf between cultures ... between the life left behind and the life to come, confronting racism and prejudice, but also compelling themselves to silence the truth or reinventing a biography to avoid conflict with reality.”

News of the award was greeted with excitement in Zanzibar, where many remembered Gurnah and his family — though few had actually read his books.

Gurnah’s books are not required reading in schools there and “are hardly to be found,” said the local education minister, Simai Mohammed Said, whose wife is Gurnah’s niece. But, he added, “a son of Zanzibar has brought so much pride.”

“The reaction is fantastic ... The young people are proud that he’s Zanzibari,” said Farid Himid, who described himself as a local historian whose father had been a teacher of the Quran to the young Gurnah.

Gurnah didn’t often visit Zanzibar, he said, but he has suddenly become the talk of young people in the semiautonomous island region.

“And many elder people are very, very happy Himid said. “Also me, as a Zanzibari. It’s a new step to make people read books again, since the internet has taken over.”

The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and 10 million Swedish kronor (over \$1.14 million). The money comes from a bequest left by the prize’s creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel, who died in 1895.

Last year’s prize went to American poet Louise Glück. Glück was a popular choice after several years of controversy. In 2018, the award was postponed after sex abuse allegations rocked the Swedish Academy, the secretive body that chooses the winners. The awarding of the 2019 prize to Austrian writer Peter

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 60 of 78

Handke caused protests because of his strong support for the Serbs during the 1990s Balkan wars.

On Monday, the Nobel Committee awarded the prize in physiology or medicine to Americans David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian for their discoveries into how the human body perceives temperature and touch.

The Nobel Prize in physics was awarded Tuesday to three scientists whose work found order in seeming disorder, helping to explain and predict complex forces of nature, including expanding our understanding of climate change.

Benjamin List and David W.C. MacMillan were named as laureates of the Nobel Prize for chemistry Wednesday for finding an easier and environmentally cleaner way to build molecules that can be used to make compounds, including medicines and pesticides.

Still to come are prizes for outstanding work in the fields of peace, on Friday, and economics, on Monday.

Lawless reported from London and Anna from Nairobi, Kenya. Associated Press writers Danica Kirka in London, Chinedu Asadu in Lagos, Nigeria. and Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed.

Read more stories about Nobel Prizes past and present by The Associated Press at <https://www.apnews.com/NobelPrizes>

## **Pentagon climate plan: war-fighting in hotter, harsher world**

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new Pentagon plan calls for incorporating the realities of a hotter, harsher Earth at every level in the U.S. military, from making worsening climate extremes a mandatory part of strategic planning to training troops how to secure their own water supplies and treat heat injury.

The Pentagon — whose jets, aircraft carriers, truck convoys, bases and office buildings cumulatively burn more oil than most countries — was among the federal agencies that President Joe Biden ordered to overhaul their climate-resilience plans when he took office in January. About 20 agencies were releasing those plans Thursday.

“These are essential steps, not just to meet a requirement, but to defend the nation under all conditions,” Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin wrote in a letter accompanying the Pentagon’s climate plan.

It follows decades of U.S. military assessments that climate change is a threat to U.S. national security, given increased risks of conflict over water and other scarcer resources, threats to U.S. military installations and supply chains, and added risks to troops.

The U.S. military is the single largest institutional consumer of oil in the world, and as such a key contributor to the worsening climate globally. But the Pentagon plan focuses on adapting to climate change, not on cutting its own significant output of climate-wrecking fossil fuel pollution.

It sketches out in businesslike terms the kind of risks U.S. forces face in the grim world ahead: Roadways collapsing under convoys as permafrost melts. Crucial equipment failing in extreme heat or cold. U.S. troops in dry regions overseas competing with local populations for dwindling water supplies, creating “friction or even conflict.”

Already, worsening wildfires in the U.S. West, fiercer hurricanes on the coasts and increasing heat in some areas are interrupting U.S. military training and readiness.

The new Department of Defense plan cites the example of Hurricane Michael in 2018, which hit Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. Beyond the \$3 billion it cost to rebuild, the storm knocked out the country’s top simulator and classroom training for F-22s stealth fighter jets for months. It was just one of several hurricanes and floods that have affected operations at U.S. bases in recent years.

The climate adaptation plan focuses on what it says is the need to incorporate accurate and current climate data and considerations into strategic, operational and tactical decision-making. That includes continued training of senior officers and others in what the report calls climate literacy.

“Failure to properly integrate a climate change understanding of related risks may significantly increase the Department’s adaptation and operating costs over time, ... imperil the supply chain, and/or result in

degraded and outdated department capabilities," the plan warns.

The Department of Defense since 2001 accounts for up to 80% of all U.S. energy consumption annually, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

A U.S. military focus on more energy-efficient equipment has reduced fossil-fuel use in some ways, and allowed some warships, for instance, to increase range and deployment times, the military says.

But the Pentagon's emphasis remains on its mission of maintaining the military's striking power. Thursday's plan suggests deploying climate-mitigation technology like battery storage and microgrids when that fits the U.S. defense mission. It suggests "exploring" — rather than mandating — steps like asking suppliers to report their own output of fossil-fuel pollution.

## **Pfizer's request to OK shots for kids a relief for parents**

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT and LAURAN NEERGAARD Associated Press

Parents tired of worrying about classroom outbreaks and sick of telling their elementary school-age children no to sleepovers and family gatherings felt a wave of relief Thursday when Pfizer asked the U.S. government to authorize its COVID-19 vaccine for youngsters ages 5 to 11.

If regulators give the go-ahead, reduced-dose kids' shots could begin within a matter of weeks.

That could bring many families a step closer to being done with remote learning, virus scares and repeated school shutdowns and quarantines.

"My son asked about playing sports. 'After you're vaccinated.' He asked about seeing his cousins again. 'After you're vaccinated.' A lot of our plans are on hold," said Sarah Staffiere of Waterville, Maine, whose 7-year-old has a rare immune disease that has forced the family to be extra cautious throughout the pandemic.

"When he's vaccinated, it would give our family our lives back," she said.

Expanding vaccine availability to roughly 28 million more U.S. children is seen as another milestone in the fight against the virus and comes amid an alarming rise in serious infections in youngsters because of the extra-contagious delta variant.

It would also push the U.S. vaccination drive further ahead of much of the rest of the world at a time when many poor countries are desperately short of vaccine.

The Food and Drug Administration must decide whether the shots are safe and effective in younger children.

Many parents and pediatricians are clamoring for protection for youngsters under 12, the current age cutoff for COVID-19 vaccinations in the U.S.

Nine-year-old Audrey Moulder, who lives in the Philadelphia suburb of Drexel Hill, is looking forward to visiting her grandmother without worrying she will give the older woman COVID-19.

"She's excited because she thinks it's a responsibility," said her father, Justin Moulder. "She wants to keep her friends safe and her family safe."

Dr. Amanda Powell, an internist and pediatrician who runs a clinic in Portland, Maine, is eager to set up worry-free play dates and plan a family trip again once her 9-year-old son is vaccinated.

"We want to be able to resume some normal activities," she said.

But there are also plenty of parents who are wary about getting the shot themselves and are in no hurry to have their children vaccinated.

Heather Miller, a mother of four from Dexter, Maine, said she wants to wait for follow-up studies on the vaccine. "I'm not 100% against getting it eventually, but I kind of fall into the 'not right now, wait and see' category," she said.

Cindy Schilling, an elementary school principal in West Virginia, which ranks dead last in the percentage of fully vaccinated residents, said it has been a rough start to the year because so many children are testing positive or quarantining at different times, making it hard for teachers and students to stay on track.

Still, she said she often hears parents say they are more concerned about the effects of the vaccine than COVID-19.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 62 of 78

"Some parents are all for it and getting it for peace of mind," she said, "but the majority of parents I've talked to will not be getting it."

While kids are at lower risk of severe illness or death than older people, COVID-19 does sometimes kill children — at least 520 so far in the U.S., according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech said their research shows younger children should get one-third of the dose now given to everyone else. After their second dose, the 5- to 11-year-olds developed virus-fighting antibody levels just as strong as those that teens and young adults get from regular-strength shots.

On Oct. 26, an independent expert panel that advises the FDA will publicly debate the evidence. If the FDA authorizes emergency use of the kid-size doses, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will make a final decision, after hearing from its outside advisers.

To avoid mix-ups, Pfizer is planning to ship the lower-dose vials specially marked for use in children.

It studied the lower dose in 2,268 volunteers ages 5 to 11 and said there were no serious side effects. The study isn't large enough to detect any extremely rare side effects, such as the heart inflammation that sometimes occurs after the second dose of the regular-strength vaccine, mostly in young men.

Moderna has requested FDA permission to use its vaccine in 12- to 17-year-olds and also is studying its shots in elementary school children. Both Pfizer and Moderna are studying even younger children as well, down to 6-month-olds. Results are expected later in the year.

---

AP journalist Emma H. Tobin contributed to this report.

---

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Dad who fled Afghanistan sues US to reunite with young sons

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Afghan man was attending a conference in California as part of his job for a U.S.-government funded project in Afghanistan when the Taliban sent a written death threat to his home, forcing him to make a heart-wrenching decision: He would not return to his wife and two young sons and instead would seek asylum and try to bring them to the United States.

Two years later, Mohammad said he regrets leaving them, and wished he had never worked for the U.S. government given the price he has paid.

As Mohammad tried to get visas for his family, his wife collapsed in 2020 and died of a heart attack while the Taliban threatened them. Mohammad, who lives in California, has been fighting ever since to be reunited with his sons, who are now 9 and 11, and are moving from house-to-house, living in hiding with their grandmother and uncle, he said. He asked that only his first name be used to protect them.

On Thursday, the International Refugee Assistance Project, whose lawyers are working on his behalf, filed a lawsuit in a federal court in San Francisco against Secretary of State Antony Blinken, alleging the administration failed in its legal obligations under the Afghan Allies Protection Act to help his family despite his work for the U.S. government during the 20-year war there.

"The only thing that I want is just one hug" from my kids, Mohammad said.

Mohammad said he has repeatedly asked the U.S. government for help. He contacted the State Department in August after bullets pierced the home where his sons were hiding before the Taliban took control of the country. He asked for his children to be evacuated as the U.S. military conducted one of the largest airlifts in history, but they were left behind.

A State Department spokesperson said in an email to The Associated Press that it does not comment on pending litigation.

Mohammad communicates daily with his sons either through calls or texts.

His youngest has broken down crying, asking, "Dad, are they going to kill me?"

"What can I say?" Mohammad asks.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 63 of 78

He sent another letter to the State Department on Sept. 9 asking that his sons be granted humanitarian parole, but again he said he got no response. He also contacted his California lawmakers.

Mohammad was approved for a special immigrant visa in January and applied the next month for his sons, requesting that their visa applications be expedited because they are in "imminent danger." Their applications are still pending.

The lawsuit states that "removing his children from Afghanistan, where they are in daily peril, and reuniting them with their only remaining parent is essential to their survival and wellbeing."

"At this point the government has known since mid-August at minimum that these kids are alone and in serious danger, and they didn't take any action to protect them," said lawyer Alexandra Zaretsky of the New York-based International Refugee Assistance Project.

Zaretsky said Mohammad is one of thousands of Afghans who worked for the U.S. government in Afghanistan and were forced to leave behind close family members to be able to get to safety. Many are still fighting to be reunited with them. The administration has provided no figures for how many special immigrant visa applicants and their family members are still stuck in Afghanistan a month after the U.S. withdrew its troops, and it has yet to take substantial action to protect them, according to the lawsuit.

Mohammad said he wants his sons to know that his work in promoting women's rights in Afghanistan for a program funded by the U.S. government was worth it, even if many of those advances may vanish under the new Taliban government.

He said he also wants them to see "because of my loyal service to the United States," they have the chance to come to a good country like the U.S. where "your future is guaranteed" and they can get a "good education and other rights that human beings should have."

He tries to encourage them not to give up, though he is losing faith in his words.

"I'm giving them hope whenever I am talking to them, but I'm also thinking, 'But is this even possible? Are they ever going to be reunited with me here?'" he said.

---

This story has been updated to correct the last name of the U.S. secretary of state. He is Antony Blinken, not Bilken.

## **Puzzle overhanging job market: When will more people return?**

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — When the U.S. government issues the September jobs report on Friday, the spotlight will fall not only on how many people were hired last month. A second question will command attention, too: Are more people finally starting to look for work?

To an extent that has surprised economists, many people who lost or quit their jobs during the pandemic recession have yet to look for work again despite a robust economic rebound that has left many employers desperate to hire.

Across the country, widespread and persistent labor shortages have hampered industries from restaurants and hotels to manufacturing and construction. Expectations that more applicants would flow into the job market in September as schools reopened and federal unemployment benefits ended have dimmed. A key reason is that coronavirus cases stemming from the delta variant remain high, although the pace of confirmed infections has slowed in recent weeks.

Speaking at a news conference last month, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell acknowledged that a surge of job seekers didn't likely occur last month, largely because of a renewed fear of infection.

"It didn't happen with any force in September, and a lot of that was delta," Powell said.

Many economists still think that most of the roughly 3 million people who lost jobs and stopped looking for work since the pandemic struck will resume their searches as COVID wanes. It took years after the 2008-2009 recession, they note, for the proportion of people working or seeking work to return to pre-recession levels. The government doesn't count people as unemployed unless they're actively looking for jobs.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 64 of 78

Still, there are signs that some of the factors that have kept many jobless people on the sidelines may be starting to ease. If so, a larger pool of job seekers might have helped boost hiring in September — or, if not, could do so in the coming months.

According to a survey by the Census Bureau, for example, the number of people who aren't working because they must stay home to care for a child declined by half in September compared with June. That figure had barely dropped last fall, when many schools remained closed and conducted virtual learning. The new census figures suggest that more parents, particularly mothers, might have rejoined the workforce last month as the school year began and their children returned to school.

In addition, an August survey by the job listings website Indeed found that the proportion of unemployed Americans who said they'd like to find a job once the school year began had more than doubled from just two months earlier.

Yet there are also signs that it might be too soon to expect a flood of parents to have rejoined the labor market. Lael Brainard, a member of the Fed's Board of Governors, noted in a recent speech that COVID-19 outbreaks in late September caused 2,000 schools to close for an average of six days in 39 states.

"The possibility of further unpredictable disruptions," Brainard said, "could cause some parents to delay their plans to return to the labor force."

Several enhanced unemployment benefits ended in early September, including a \$300-a-week federal supplement as well as programs that, for the first time, covered gig workers and people who were jobless for six months or more. So far, the ending of those programs appears to have had only a small effect on the number of people seeking work.

Governors in about 25 states ended the \$300 benefit before the nationwide expiration in September. Research by economists at Goldman Sachs found that unemployed people who were looking for work were much more likely to take jobs when their benefits ended. But the early cut-offs did not cause people on the sidelines to start searching again, Goldman concluded.

Scott Sureddin, chief executive of DHL Supply Chain North America, said he believes that the ending of supplemental unemployment aid has boosted the number of applications his company is receiving, even though the number of job-seekers remains below pre-pandemic levels. The company plans to hire about 12,000 temporary employees for the holiday season. So far, it has filled about half those jobs.

The company has raised pay for warehouse workers from \$15 an hour, before COVID struck, to roughly \$18 to \$20, Sureddin said. The company also centralized its hiring so it could bring people on board faster — before another employer could hire them.

Still, finding enough drivers remains a challenge, Sureddin said, just as it was before COVID. Many people are reluctant to drive long routes away from their families for an extended period. The company is offering more flexible schedules at its warehouses, in part to accommodate parents.

"A lot of people are changing careers based on where they want to work, and whether they can spend more time with their family," he added.

Another reason workers are scarce is a surge in retirements among older, more affluent workers whose home equity and stock portfolios have surged since the pandemic struck and who have managed to build up savings. Goldman Sachs estimates that about 1.5 million people have retired who wouldn't have before the pandemic upended the economy. Many of these people will likely stay retired, economists expect.

In the meantime, fear of COVID continues to keep some would-be job seekers on the sidelines, notably those who previously worked in public-facing service jobs at restaurants, bars, hotels and retailers.

"Folks are just hesitant to take hourly jobs with a high likelihood of interacting with the public," said Dave Gilbertson, vice president of UKG, a software company that tracks the shifts worked at its 35,000 client companies. Its data has closely matched the government's jobs numbers this year.

Gilberston said that UKG's data points to modestly better hiring in September compared with August. He said the delta variant, which sharply slowed hiring in August, reduced the number of shifts worked last month in the Southeast, where COVID cases soared in late summer.

Brainard noted that the number of people not working because they had COVID or were caring for



someone with the disease doubled between July and early September, according to Census data.

Economists have forecast that employers added 488,000 jobs in September — about half the gains in both June and July but well above August's sluggish 235,000 job growth. They expect the unemployment rate to drop from 5.2% to 5.1%.

"It may just be that it's going to take more time," Powell said at his news conference last month, "but it still seems that inexorably, people will ... get back to work when it's time to do that."

## **US health experts urge flu shots to avoid 'twindemic'**

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

The U.S. is gearing up in case of a bad flu season on top of the continuing COVID-19 crisis, with a plea Thursday for Americans to get vaccinated against both.

"I get it: We are all tired of talking about vaccines," said Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But "it is doubly important this year" to get your flu shot, added Walensky, who got her own vaccination earlier this week just as she has every year since she was a medical student in 1995. "We are preparing for the return of the flu."

Flu cases dropped to historically low levels globally over the pandemic, as restrictions designed to slow the spread of the coronavirus helped block other respiratory viruses. But with schools and businesses reopened, international travel resuming and far less masking, there's no way to predict how bad a flu season the U.S. might expect this winter.

But officials are worried because a different respiratory virus, named RSV, that usually attacks young children in the winter instead roared back last summer as soon as people started dropping their masks.

"Is that a harbinger of a worse influenza season? We don't know, but we certainly don't want a 'twindemic,' both COVID and influenza," said Dr. William Schaffner of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases.

And if you still need a COVID-19 vaccination -- either first shots or a booster dose -- you can get it at the same visit as a flu shot.

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccination for just about everyone starting with 6-month-old babies. Influenza is especially dangerous for older adults, children under age 5, people with chronic health problems such as diabetes, asthma or heart disease, and during pregnancy.

Last fall, about as many Americans overall got their flu vaccination as they did before the pandemic -- about half of the eligible population, according to CDC data released Thursday. But Walensky was dismayed by a slight drop in child flu vaccinations last year -- and at widening racial and ethnic disparities. Last year, 43% of Black Americans and 45% of Hispanics got a flu vaccination compared to 56% of whites.

The CDC expects vaccine makers to deliver 188 million to 200 million doses of flu vaccine. Most Americans with insurance can get one without a co-pay. Options include regular shots, shots that aim to give older adults a little extra protection, and a nasal spray. All offer protection against four different flu strains that global experts predict are the kinds most likely to spread this year.

At the same time they get vaccinated against flu, officials also urged older adults and people with chronic illnesses to ask about getting a vaccine against a type of pneumonia that is a frequent complication.

---

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **What to expect as US weighs COVID shots for younger kids**

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

The Food and Drug Administration is considering whether to allow COVID-19 vaccinations in children ages 5 to 11 — using kid-sized doses.

Until now, only people 12 and older could be vaccinated in the U.S., with shots made by Pfizer and its

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 66 of 78

partner BioNTech. That's been a huge frustration for many pediatricians and parents, especially as the extra-contagious delta variant has raged through poorly vaccinated communities — and the schools in them.

On Thursday, the companies formally applied for emergency use of a lower dose for 5- to 11-year-olds. Here's what to expect:

Q: Why do younger kids need a vaccine?

A: The virus generally causes more serious disease in older adults than in children. But it can sometimes be severe in youngsters, too. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, COVID-19 has killed at least 520 children in the U.S.

The delta variant also caused a jump in child infections, making it more difficult to keep schools fully open and students in class. A recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey found nearly a quarter of parents with kids in class this fall say they've already had to quarantine a child because of possible virus exposure.

Q: How soon could vaccinations begin for kids under 12?

A: First under consideration are shots for 5- to 11-year-olds. Advisers to the FDA are expected to publicly deliberate Pfizer's evidence on Oct. 26, setting the stage for the agency to declare if the shots are safe and effective for the roughly 28 million youngsters in that age group.

If it does, there's another step: Advisers to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will decide whether to recommend kids actually get the vaccinations. The CDC makes the final call.

FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks has said the agency would decide "hopefully within a matter of weeks" after Pfizer submitted its data.

Q: Would younger kids get the same dose as teens and adults?

A: No. Pfizer aims to give 5- to 11-year-olds one-third of the dose that's given to everyone 12 and older.

Q: What's the evidence the kid-sized shots work?

A: Pfizer studied the lower dose in 2,268 volunteers in this age group, giving two-thirds vaccine and the rest dummy shots. The company says vaccinated 5- to 11-year-olds developed coronavirus-fighting antibody levels that were as strong as what teenagers and young adults get after the regular-strength shots.

Q: Was the vaccine safe for youngsters?

A: The young kids experienced similar or fewer temporary side effects such as sore arms and achiness than teens.

One exceedingly rare risk of both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines is heart inflammation, usually in young men or boys. The CDC estimates that for every million fully vaccinated 12- to 17-year-old boys, the shots would prevent about 5,700 COVID-19 cases, 71 hospitalizations and two deaths while causing no more than 69 cases of heart inflammation. It's difficult for scientific studies to detect such a rare problem so regulators will have to debate the possibility of that risk with the lower-dose shots for younger kids.

Q: If it's cleared, will the kid-sized vaccine come in special packages?

A: Yes, to avoid any dosing mix-ups Pfizer plans to ship vials specially marked for pediatric use containing the lower dose.

Q: What about vaccinations for kids younger than 5?

A: Stay tuned: Study results are expected later this year.

---

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Congo's famous mountain gorilla dies at 14 in Virunga Park

By JEAN-YVES KAMALE and CARLEY PETESCH Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — Ndakasi, a mountain gorilla who famously posed for a selfie with a ranger at Congo's Virunga National Park, has died at 14 after a long illness, the park said.

"It is with heartfelt sadness that Virunga announces the death of beloved orphaned mountain gorilla, Ndakasi, who had been under the care of the park's Senkwekwe Center for more than a decade," a statement from the park said this week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 67 of 78

"Ndakasi took her final breath in the loving arms of her caretaker and lifelong friend, Andre Bauma," said the statement, adding that she died on Sept. 26 following a prolonged illness in which her condition rapidly deteriorated.

Ndakasi was just two months old when rangers found her clinging to the lifeless body of her mother who had been gunned down by armed militia in 2007. Bauma comforted her that first night by holding her to his bare chest and he continued caring for her since then. She was transferred to the Senkwekwe Center after its creation in 2009 and lived with other orphaned mountain gorillas viewed as too vulnerable to return to the wild.

The mountain gorilla's life was featured in shows and the documentary film "Virunga," and she gained internet fame in 2019 for a photo that featured her standing relaxed on two feet, with her belly out next to another gorilla, Ndeze, and with another ranger in the foreground taking the selfie.

"It was a privilege to support and care for such a loving creature," Bauma said in a statement. "It was Ndakasi's sweet nature and intelligence that helped me to understand the connection between humans and great apes and why we should do everything in our power to protect them."

Bauma said he was proud to have called Ndakasi a friend.

"I loved her like a child and her cheerful personality brought a smile to my face every time I interacted with her," he said in the statement.

Virunga National Park in eastern Congo is home to some of the world's last mountain gorillas. Neighboring Rwanda and Uganda also have some of the mountain gorillas and together their population is more than 1,000.

Nearly 700 rangers in Virunga park risk their lives to protect its wildlife in a region that has seen more than two decades of armed conflict and instability.

---

Petesch reported from Dakar, Senegal.

---

Updates to correct that the selfie photo was taken with another ranger and not Bauma.

## Phoenix, other cities keep growing as climate danger rises

By ANITA SNOW Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The mustard-colored apartments built as public housing more than half a century ago are among the hottest spots in Phoenix, with only a few scrawny trees and metal clothesline poles offering shade in dusty courtyards.

The two-story stucco structures in Edison-Eastlake, a historically Black neighborhood that has become majority Latino, are among the last still standing halfway through a six-year redevelopment project that aims to better protect residents from extreme heat amid a megadrought in the West.

Phoenix was always scorching, but climate change has made the nation's fifth-largest city even hotter, with temperatures in early September still climbing to 111 degrees (43.8 Celsius). Conditions weren't much better in Las Vegas, some 300 miles (483 kilometers) to the north, where the thermometer hit 106 degrees (41.3 Celsius).

But in one of the more remarkable findings from the 2020 census, the searing weather has not deterred Americans from settling in such places. The desert cities are in two of the five fastest-growing counties in the U.S., and new population data shows that people keep flocking to communities where climate change makes life more uncomfortable and more precarious.

"In the Southwest, we are now in the process of re-imagining our environment," said Nancy Brune, executive director of Nevada's nonprofit Guinn Center, a think tank that has studied how extreme heat affects communities. "We have to consciously ensure that we and our buildings can withstand the heat."

Jobs have driven much of the growth. According to a census report released late last month, business investments in the desert Southwest expanded by more than twice the national average every decade between 1950 and 2010 and continue to increase, with health care growth leading the way.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 68 of 78

But the burgeoning population also exposes more people to peril.

A risk index map by the Federal Emergency Management Agency found that the nation's five fastest-growing cities — Phoenix, Las Vegas, Houston, Fort Worth and Seattle — are in counties at relatively high to very high risk of natural disaster. The risks include hurricanes, flooding, wildfires and heat waves — all phenomena associated with climate change.

The people at greatest risk are often in poor and racially diverse communities where many households lack the means to cope with disasters, including heat waves that are more frequent, widespread and severe.

"Until people recognize that extreme heat is a critical problem, we are not going to see critical changes," said Eva Olivas, executive director of the nonprofit Phoenix Revitalization Corp., which helps revive neighborhoods.

Her nonprofit and others have sought insight from Edison-Eastlake residents like Rosalyn Gorden, who described sitting on blistering metal bus benches and competing with homeless individuals for shade.

The original public housing did not have air conditioners, said Gorden, who now lives in a newer complex.

"The older buildings just had swamp coolers that because of their age frequently had to be serviced or repaired," she said, referring to the coolers typically placed in or by a window that circulate evaporated water.

Extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths, triggering heat strokes, heart attacks and kidney failures, especially in desert locales where people don't always realize they are overheated because sweat dries rapidly in the arid air.

More than one-third of the world's annual heat deaths are due directly to global warming, according to a study published in May in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. It included about 200 U.S. cities and found over 1,100 yearly deaths from climate change-caused heat, many in the East and Midwest, where many homes lack air conditioning.

In the West, Phoenix's Maricopa County recorded 323 heat related deaths in 2020, and Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, had 82.

The rising death tolls are challenging governments to protect vulnerable populations and to ensure there is enough water for everyone as the drought and increasingly hot summers drain reservoirs fed by the Colorado River.

Those challenges will only grow as cities keep attracting more people.

Maricopa County's population jumped 15.8% over the past decade to 4.4 million as people undeterred by rising temperatures fled more expensive areas like California. Not only was Phoenix the fastest-expanding U.S. city with 11.2% growth, the census confirmed its status as the fifth largest, surpassing Philadelphia's 1.603 million, with 1.608 million people.

The increase in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, got a big push from residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino, who comprise more than 30% of the population.

Environmental activist Cinthia Moore said she's watched Clark County's population explode as more people move to southern Nevada, even as her largely Latino East Las Vegas neighborhood endures more frequent heat waves.

"People here don't walk outside in the heat unless they have to," said Moore, Nevada organizer for the group Moms Clean Air Force.

Moore said the heat is especially hard on low-income renters who cannot install solar panels to save energy costs and must rely on landlords to fix broken air conditioners.

Three years ago, a 72-year-old Phoenix-area woman died at her home after Arizona's largest electric utility turned off her service for failure to pay \$51. The utility this year suspended disconnections and waived late fees through Oct. 15.

Still, only 15% of Maricopa County's heat-related deaths last year occurred indoors. Most of those people had air conditioning that was either broken or turned off.

The other 85% died outside, illustrating the dangers for people with landscaping or construction jobs, or those without cars who must walk, bike or take public transportation.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 69 of 78

Researchers at Arizona State University's Morrison Institute and the Guinn Center recently produced parallel studies on extreme heat and sought ideas from community leaders in diverse neighborhoods in Phoenix and Las Vegas. Many of them noted a lack of shade.

Both cities intend to plant tens of thousands more drought-resistant trees in vulnerable areas, but that increases the need for more water, especially with young trees.

Phoenix also plans to install 400 shelters at bus stops in the next few years. Phoenix and Las Vegas residents interviewed for the studies suggested adding water fountains, water bottle filling stations and misters at transit stops.

The nonprofit group Trees Matter is working to increase canopy coverage in low-income Phoenix neighborhoods of color, especially around schools identified by health officials as needing shade, said Aimee Esposito, the group's executive director.

The Edison-Eastlake project is a model for cities seeking to protect residents from heat, said David Hondula, associate professor at Arizona State University's School of Geographical Sciences & Urban Planning.

Once home to Arizona's largest concentration of public housing, Edison-Eastlake suffered decades of crime and blight. With a \$30 million grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the city is replacing 577 obsolete public housing units with over 1,000 new mixed-income, affordable and market-rate units. More trees and other vegetation are envisioned.

It's an optimistic vision for what the area can become — and the kind of project that could become more necessary if the city keeps on growing.

Associated Press writers Michael Schneider in Orlando, Florida, and Angeliki Kastanis in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Follow Anita Snow on Twitter at [twitter.com/asnowreports](https://twitter.com/asnowreports)

EDITOR'S NOTE — This is the second story in an occasional series looking at the interaction between population growth and climate change.

## Ghost towns: Nursing home staffing falls amid pandemic

By MATT SEDENSKY AP National Writer

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — When Natalie Walters arrived at her father's nursing home, the parking lot was nearly empty and, inside, the elevator made no stops. On the 13th floor, the lights were off and the TVs silent. The last time she was allowed inside, nine months earlier, aides passed in the hall and a nurse waved from the records room.

Now, it felt like a ghost town.

One of the few staffers on duty broke the news: Walters was too late and her father was already dead of COVID-19. In the nursing home's newfound emptiness, the scream she unleashed echoed in the void.

"It was so still and quiet," says Walters, whose description of desolation at the home aligns with records showing its staffing level has fallen over the course of the pandemic. "How alone must he have been."

Even before COVID-19 bared the truth of a profit-driven industry with too few caring for society's most vulnerable, thin staffing was a hallmark of nursing homes around the country. Now, staffing is even thinner, with about one-third of U.S. nursing homes reporting lower levels of nurses and aides than before the pandemic began ravaging their facilities, an Associated Press analysis of federal data finds.

"It's already so low. To drop further is appalling," says Charlene Harrington, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco, whose research on nursing homes has frequently focused on staffing.

As COVID-19 engulfed homes, some workers fled over fears of exposure. Others were lured to easier work at similar or higher pay in restaurants and stores. And some were laid off by homes as occupancy fell.

Nursing aides are the backbone of homes' staffing. They are overwhelmingly female and disproportionately members of minority groups and, working jobs with high injury rates and low pay, the industry has long

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 70 of 78

struggled to hire and retain them. Critics say if they simply boosted wages, the applicants would come. Whatever the reason for skeletal staffs, the result is clear: Residents have fewer to answer their calls to keep them safe, clean and fed, while facilities have helped their bottom lines.

Some 32% of nursing homes reported staff-to-resident ratios in June that were lower than those in February 2020, AP's analysis shows. In homes posting lower ratios, the average resident had 21 fewer minutes of contact with staff each day, or about 11 hours a month, translating to scarcer help at mealtime, fewer showers and less repositioning to prevent painful bedsores. In the worst cases, when someone falls, chokes or is otherwise endangered, it means there are fewer people to discover the problem or hear their calls for help.

Tamika Dalton saw it first-hand with her 74-year-old mother, who moved to Blumenthal Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Greensboro, North Carolina, in January 2019 as her multiple sclerosis worsened. At the time, the facility had a staffing level above the benchmark recommended by many experts.

But once COVID-19 kept visitors from going inside, Dalton peered through her mother's window, seeing fewer and fewer aides pass by and her mother sometimes sitting for hours in a soiled diaper. Her hair was often matted and her toenails grew long. A bedsore the size of a fist festered on her backside. Sometimes, unable to dial a phone herself and with no aides in sight, she would holler to a passing custodian for help.

"She would call out for help and no one would come," she said. "There was no one around."

As conditions continued to deteriorate, Theresa Dalton, a retired minister, contracted COVID-19 and died Feb. 12. By June, the facility's staffing was down 15% from the start of 2020, and 25% from the start of 2019.

"They did that for their own pockets," Tamika Dalton says of the lower staffing. "There's a lot of greed."

Requests for comment to Blumenthal and its operator, Choice Health Management Services, were not returned. In a letter to state regulators, an attorney for the facility said complaints were taken seriously and that some problems, like the bedsore, were exacerbated by the patient's failure to follow orders.

"The facility never fell below staffing expectations," the letter said.

The American Health Care Association, which lobbies for care facilities, said 99% of nursing homes and 96% of assisted living facilities said they had staffing shortages in a September survey. In a June survey, AHCA found 84% of nursing homes were losing revenue due to fewer patients coming from hospitals, and that nearly half of nursing homes and assisted living facilities had made cuts.

AHCA officials declined an interview request but, in a statement, called for additional federal funding, changes to Medicaid and government programs to bolster caregiver hiring and development.

"The labor shortage in long-term care is the worst it has been in decades. Many facilities are now in danger of closing because of workforce challenges," the organization said. "If we want to improve the workforce situation in nursing homes, we need policymakers to make a long-term investment."

Medicaid, whose benefits are reserved for the poor, is the largest payer of long-term care in the U.S. Older adults' shorter nursing home stays – a monthlong rehabilitation after a hip replacement, for example – are typically covered by Medicare, which often pays providers a rate several times higher than Medicaid. For that reason, short-term Medicare patients are nursing homes' golden geese.

But the pandemic shrank new Medicare admissions just as outlays for things like protective gear soared.

With profits imperiled, some homes went on a search to cut costs.

All told, across all job types, nursing home employment, which had grown steadily in the decade prior to the pandemic, has plunged by more than 380,000 jobs in the past year and a half, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Staffing ratios would almost certainly be worse if not for lower occupancy due to more than 135,000 COVID-19 fatalities in nursing homes and higher-than-normal deaths of other causes.

Many families of those who have died in nursing homes since COVID-19's start are convinced their loved ones' deaths were precipitated or hastened by poor staffing. Linking an individual death to staffing is difficult, but studies have repeatedly linked higher nursing home staffing with better outcomes.

Harrington has little doubt that low staffing, combined with poor testing practices and lack of protective equipment, played a role in COVID-19's proliferation.

"This is why the infections spread," she said. "If the nursing homes had beefed up their staffing, done

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 71 of 78

the testing twice a week and had adequate PPE ... they would have saved thousands of lives.”

For those who remain in nursing homes, the impacts of lower staffing are dovetailing with the pandemic’s toll.

Dave Bartok, a 74-year-old retired steelworker with vascular dementia, has lost weight since COVID-19’s start and has often been so weak he could barely hold his head up. His family blames much of that on isolation.

But they see other problems as products of lower staffing: Unchanged diapers. Ants crawling on the mattress. Being left in bed instead of taken on a walk.

Bartok’s son-in-law, Eric Paulikonis, said staff would drop off food for his father-in-law but left without helping him eat, leaving him unable to open milk cartons and attempting to eat cellophane-wrapped sandwiches through the plastic. The staff ratio at the facility, The Laurels of Huber Heights, just outside Dayton, Ohio, fell 8 percent from the pandemic’s start through June, according to its filings.

“They just don’t have enough time in the day to do what a patient needs to be done,” Paulikonis says.

In a statement, The Laurels of Huber Heights acknowledged “a staffing situation that looks much different than when Mr. Bartok was initially admitted to the facility in 2019.” The facility is committed to hiring and retention, the statement said, “but it is an uphill battle to overcome preconceived notions about the industry” and because it is “unable to match” the wages of competitors.

Federal law requires nursing homes to have sufficient staff to meet residents’ needs, but nearly all interpretation of what that means is left to states. Some states have no set staffing thresholds. Others have one so low advocates see it as meaningless. Even when laws exist, enforcement is often toothless.

A landmark 2001 study funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which oversees nursing homes, recommended, on average, more than 4 hours of nursing care per resident daily.

Most U.S. facilities don’t meet that threshold.

When Kristin Pullins rejoined the staff at Montrose Health Center in Montrose, Iowa, last August, she was immediately struck by how different staffing was from when she worked there a year earlier, when the home had a different owner. Instead of two licensed nurses on a given shift, now there was just one.

“We just weren’t able to answer their call lights quick enough,” says Pullins. “As soon as I could get in and get out, I had to go, because I had so much to do.”

With fewer on hand, Pullins said bedsores, wounds and falls increased. When one resident had stroke-like symptoms as her shift ended, Pullins said a supervisor said he’d have to wait an hour until the night nurse arrived. Staff was spread so thin that Pullins had to keep working when she had COVID-19.

When Pullins brought up poor staffing with managers she said she was listened to, but nothing changed. She says the home’s administrator told her if she left, “You’ll come crying back.”

By the time Pullins quit in February, staffing at Montrose was 9% lower than a year earlier.

In a statement, Montrose’s administrator, Mallory Orton, said the home “provides appropriate levels of staffing” and that it “disputes the allegations made by Ms. Pullins,” but could not comment further.

Facilities’ staffing ratios don’t always tell the full story of how few may be working at any given time because they are based on averages across shifts, including those that are most thinly staffed.

At Bay Breeze Health and Rehabilitation Center in Venice, Florida, staffing ratios posted in June showed the home was better staffed than before COVID-19. But Amy Runkle, a veteran nurse’s aide there, says on her shifts, she is typically responsible for 16 to 18 residents, higher than before the pandemic’s start.

“Can anybody in their right mind tell me how that’s even possible? There’s no way you can do all the things that these residents need never mind deserve,” she says. “They’re needing a lot of care and you can’t give it to them because you have so many to take care of. You have to work there every day knowing you can’t do the best you can because you don’t have the staff.”

Neither Bay Breeze nor its parent company, Consulate Health Care, responded to requests for comment.

Negative perceptions of nursing homes – necessary institutions for those with complicated medical and psychological cases – have led a majority of the U.S. public to insist they’d never end up in one and has fueled the growth of other types of facilities, including assisted living. Operators of those types of homes have tried to cut a starkly different image, from chandelier-bedecked lobbies to dining rooms with house

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 72 of 78

wine lists, even as they are often plagued by some of the very same problems as nursing homes.

Assisted living homes are out of reach for the country's poorest and often don't offer the services needed by the sickest, and are largely outside of federal oversight and more laxly regulated by states.

Though the federal government does not gather staffing data from assisted living facilities, families of residents around the country are noting fewer staff on-site as the pandemic has worn on.

As Suzette Heathcote monitored feeds from two video cameras her family mounted in her father's room at a Michigan assisted living facility, she saw him left for an hour and a half on the toilet and longer in a chair or bed, waiting for help. His catheter bag was left unchanged and overflowing. He'd go 14 hours without someone filling his water. A large wound was left untreated and a gaping bedsore cratered.

"When they shut down, all of a sudden there wasn't that family there and they lost all that free help. He was always waiting for it and he was begging for it," says Heathcote, who believes the lack of care hastened her 81-year-old father's death in January as he struggled with the effects of Parkinson's disease. "They had nobody to do the job that we were paying them to do."

Despite all the horror stories of long-term care, it seemed 77-year-old Jack Walters was better positioned for his final years than most Americans.

He and his wife had been prodigious savers, allowing the family to spend around \$17,000 each month for his care as his vascular dementia worsened. And though most U.S. nursing homes are for-profit companies, Walters found a place at a non-profit home, Loretto Health and Rehabilitation in Syracuse, New York.

But Loretto is marked by many of the same problems as elsewhere.

It struggles to hire and maintain front-line workers to a staff that is emblematic of the haves and have-nots. Nursing aide jobs have been advertised as paying \$17.85 hourly, while Loretto's CEO was making over \$508,000 in 2018, according to the most recent available IRS filing for the organization.

And its staffing ratio – 3.9 hours per resident daily at the start of the pandemic – fell about 6 percent to below 3.7 hours by the time Walters died. It dropped even more in the months after.

Walters says, looking back, the evidence of low staffing was scattered in her father's final months.

A retired pharmacist who never left a hair out of place or a nail untrimmed suddenly looked to his daughter like "The Big Lebowski," appearing unshaven and shaggy on FaceTime calls, having weeks pass without a shower, and wearing the same shirt for days at a time in photos snapped by aides.

A man who always had a voracious appetite and tore through peanut butter cups with Walters the last time she saw him was now looking drawn as his weight dropped and suffered bouts of dehydration.

Walters doesn't know if poor staffing led to her father's COVID-19 infection, or what other missteps might be revealed when her family ultimately goes through her father's medical file. She wonders, if staff couldn't even get around to bathing her father, what else might they have missed?

In a statement, Loretto's chief marketing officer, Julie Sheedy, said the facility couldn't comment on Walters' specific experience, but said "while our employment numbers may have changed up and down over the years, our staffing levels have been consistently higher than the statewide staffing averages."

It was just before Christmas when Walters and her mother arrived at Loretto after an urgent call, only to learn they were too late. Walters stood at her father's feet and wailed. Her mother collapsed atop him.

When the funeral director came to take the body away, Walters' mother kissed her hand and pressed it on the back of the hearse. "I love you, Jack," she said.

The sun was bright and the air was bitter and no one else was in sight.

---

Sedensky can be reached at [msedensky@ap.org](mailto:msedensky@ap.org) and <https://twitter.com/sedensky>. Associated Press writers Haven Daley in San Francisco and Larry Fenn in New York contributed to this report.

## AP WAS THERE: Great Chicago fire, Oct. 8-10, 1871

CHICAGO (AP) — Editor's note: It was 150 years ago that the Great Chicago Fire ignited, eventually killing about 300 people and consuming a major portion of the city over three days.

The Associated Press, just 25 years old then, sent dispatches first from its office in the Chicago Tribune



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 73 of 78

building before staff fled to a Western Union office, where they filed before fleeing again because of the approaching fire.

The accounts vividly showed the fire's chaos and destruction, work that AP's member news organizations praised then, including this from the Fort Wayne Daily Gazette in Indiana:

"Most heartily do we agree with the Terre Haute Express that the 'General Agent of the Western Associated Press, Hon. W.H. Smith, deserves the thanks of the country for the splendid manner in which he performed his duties at Chicago last week.' With the telegraph buildings burned, and everything in the worst confusion, the most graphic and accurate reports were sent out promptly to all parts of the country."

Here are excerpts of AP dispatches sent from Oct. 8-10, 1871.

Chicago, Oct. 8

Tonight is the most awful night in the annals of the city. The fire, which commenced at 10 p.m., has already swept over a space three times as large as that of last night and it is still rushing on with greater fury than has marked any stage of the progress. The engines appearing almost powerless. Fire Marshal Williams has just telegraphed to Milwaukee for all the steamers they can spare. The conflagration has already devastated at least 20 blocks, mostly composed of smaller class dwellings inhabited by poor people. Not less than three hundred buildings are entirely destroyed and more than that number of families have been rendered homeless.

The wind is blowing almost a gale from the south and a number of sparks and brands are sweeping over the city and threatening destruction on every hand. Since this report commenced, two additional alarms have been struck, and the tower on the courthouse caught fire from the dying brands, but was extinguished by the watchman in the tower. No description can give an adequate idea of the terrible scene. The fire started in a row of wooden tenements on Dockhaven Street, between Jefferson and Clinton, and as was the case last night spread with terrible rapidity before a single engine could get on the ground, and the block is in flames and burning furiously.

New York, Oct. 10 -- 7 a.m.

No press dispatches have been received from Chicago later than six o'clock last evening. The last dispatch was sent circuitously by the way of St. Louis and Cincinnati, and reached us four hours after it left Chicago.

The agent of Associated Press in Cincinnati reports that private advices from Chicago were received in the early part of the night that the fire had been checked, but he was unable to get confirmation of the good news as wires were not working to Chicago and up to three A.M., communications had not been restored.

The "private advices" referred to may have been simply a repetition of the 6 P.M. dispatch from Chicago which represented that flames were checked at 1 P.M. in the southern district of the city by the blowing up of buildings under the direction of General Sheridan, but since that hour a service dispatch was sent by the Western Union Telegraph office in Buffalo, at 11 o'clock P.M., to the general office of the Company in New York that the following had been received from Chicago; no time given:

"The fire is spreading rapidly. The telegraph company has been driven from its temporary office. The whole city is doomed to go. The wind has changed and is blowing the fire in all directions."

Since the above report was received, nothing has been heard from Chicago, and the telegraph office here reports that no telegraphic communication whatever has been had with the city.

New York, Oct. 10

The excitement in the city relative to the Chicago calamity is in nowise abated this morning. All the people who were going to workshops early were anxious readers of the papers containing Associated Press dispatches, and the sales at the news stands have been enormous.

Crowds of business men were at the hotels until a late hour last night, to obtain the latest information on the fire, and many were in trepidation fearing they were joint sufferers with their mercantile correspondents in the apparently doomed city.

It is thought that much of the business will be entirely suspended. Many of our insurance companies will doubtless be compelled to suspend for a short time in order to ascertain their liabilities, while the grain and produce trade will undoubtedly be brought to a complete standstill. Everyone in our community feels

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 74 of 78

a complete sorrow for the sufferers, and the response to the Mayor's proclamation for help will be spontaneous and of a liberality worthy of the great metropolis.

New York, Oct. 10

A Chicago special to the Times dated 2:30 this morning contains the following additional news: The wind is still boisterous and if it turns north, nothing can save the western division. The present loss is estimated at from \$100,000,000 to \$200,000,000. The fire-proof buildings burned like tinder, especially the banks, not one of which remains. Few business persons saved even their papers. The whole population was busy all night, and the streets are now like a bivouac with sleeping men. The loss of life it is impossible to estimate.

The shipping ordered into the north branch of the Chicago River was sent adrift into Lake Michigan. Many vessels were burned. All business is suspended and must remain so for the present. Tremendous efforts were made to save the Tribune and Post, as well as the City Hall and Government buildings, but nothing remains but blackened stores and crackling cinders. No papers can be published until type comes from elsewhere, as the type foundries are also burned.

The origin of the fire was in a stable where a woman took a kerosene lamp at milking time. A large number of the firemen were killed, and all did their duty nobly, but the streams of water on the burning blocks were like fountain jets against the awful heat of the conflagration. The new hotel, eight or nine stories high, just completed, sent up pyramids of flame, making the water of Lake Michigan ruby colored.

For miles, the burning bridges along the river were swinging, a graceful arch of fire from shore to shore. The burning ships sailed in crimson waters. All the churches in the south division, the Convent of Mercy, all the railroad buildings and the front mansions on Michigan and Wabash avenues, are gone. The very pavements are burned.

Rumor says now that another fire has broken out in Hyde Park, a southern suburb, and is moving north. If this be true, the destruction of the remaining portion of the southern division cannot be prevented. One hundred squares are already burned in the southern division. The population will probably be reduced fifty thousand in a month. Business men cannot resume unless substantial help is sent from the East and West. A hundred thousand employes engaged in mercantile business are out of employment.

The streets leading to the unburnt portion of the south part of the city and all leading to the one unbroken bridge west are completely blocked by all kinds of vehicles carrying sick and injured people and blackened furniture. The county records are safe, but the city records are lost. Mayor Mason has received dispatches from St. Louis, Milwaukee, Detroit, Louisville and elsewhere inquiring what they shall send. He asks for cooked food for 100,000 homeless persons.

Oct. 10 — 11 A.M.

At midnight, last night, the Western Union Telegraph Office, which had been located on the corner of Wabash Avenue and Sixteenth street, was removed to Twenty-second street in consequence of the approach of the fire. At three o'clock, this morning, notice was given that fire was again upon them and they must make a farther retreat. Since that time, there has been no communication with the city.

New York, Oct 10 — 11:10 A.M.

The following good news is just received. The Western Union Telegraph Office furnishes the following: "St. Louis just had communication with Chicago, and reports that there was a heavy rain there last night and the fire is all out."

Source: Boston Daily Evening Transcript, Fall River (Massachusetts) Daily Evening News and The Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald. Retrieved by AP archivist Francesca Pitaro of the AP Corporate Archives, New York.

## **EXPLAINER: What's behind the looming Hollywood strike?**

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

A major Hollywood strike could be on the horizon for some 60,000 behind-the-scenes workers in the entertainment industry. Over the weekend, members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IASTE) overwhelmingly voted in favor of authorizing a nationwide strike for the first time in

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 75 of 78

its history.

Here we look at who is involved, what they're asking for and what's at stake.

**WHAT IS THE IATSE?**

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (or IATSE for short, pronounced eye-AHT'-see) is a 128-year-old union representing over 150,000 artists, craftspeople and technicians in the entertainment industry in the United States and Canada. Comprised of cinematographers, costumers, set designers, script supervisors, hair and makeup artists, animators, stagehands and many, many more, the IATSE represents essentially everyone who works in any form of entertainment (including movies, television, theater, concerts, trade shows and broadcasting) who isn't an actor, director, producer or screenwriter.

**WHY ARE THEY IN THE NEWS?**

The three-year contracts that cover about 60,000 of the union's members — one that primarily covers film and TV production in Los Angeles and Hollywood and another that covers other production hubs including New Mexico and Georgia — expired in July. For the past four months the union has been negotiating new terms with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). Those discussions fell apart on Sept. 20. The IATSE says that the AMPTP have failed to address their biggest workplace problems, and membership voted overwhelmingly to give the organization's president, Matthew D. Loeb, the ability to authorize a strike.

**WHAT ARE THE WORKPLACE PROBLEMS?**

The IATSE says its members are subjected to excessive working hours, unlivable wages for the lowest paid crafts and failure to provide reasonable rest, including meal breaks and time off between marathon working days and weekend work. Further, they say that workers on some "new media" streaming projects get paid even less. The Instagram account @ia\_stories has been sharing anonymous accounts of some harrowing personal workplace stories and the effects of the excessively long hours on everything from personal safety to mental health.

**WAIT, WHAT'S THE AMPTP?**

The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers is a group that represents hundreds of entertainment companies, including the major Hollywood studios, streaming services and production companies, and negotiates essentially all industry-wide guild and union contracts.

**WHY ARE THE STREAMERS PAYING WORKERS LESS THAN TRADITIONAL STUDIOS?**

In 2009, the IATSE and studios mutually agreed that new media productions required greater "flexibility" because the medium was not yet economically viable. That has changed in a big way, but the expectation of flexibility from crews has not. They feel they are being taken advantage of while streaming budgets and profits have reached blockbuster levels.

**WHO ELSE SUPPORTS THE IATSE DEMANDS?**

Social media support has been significant and many prominent people in the film industry have spoken out in support of the crews, like Octavia Spencer, Mindy Kaling, Jane Fonda and Katherine Heigl. On Monday, the Directors Guild of America issued a statement of solidarity too, signed by the likes of Steven Spielberg, Christopher Nolan, Barry Jenkins, Ron Howard, Ava DuVernay and Lesli Linka Glatter. Congressman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), Senator Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), and 118 Senators and members of the House have also sent a letter to the AMPTP urging good faith negotiations.

**IS A STRIKE INEVITABLE?**

No, and leadership on both sides have said they would like to avoid it if possible. On Tuesday, the IATSE and the AMPTP resumed negotiations.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY DO STRIKE?**

With 60,000 workers covered under the expired agreements, most productions would have to shut down in the U.S., including network shows and Netflix productions. But not all are affected: The IATSE contracts for "pay tv," including HBO, Showtime, Starz, Cinemax and BET, don't expire until Dec. 31, 2022 so those will keep going. Same goes for commercials and low budget productions, which also have different agreements.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 76 of 78

As far as long-term consequences, it all depends on how long the strike goes on. The 100-day 2007-2008 Writers Guild of America strike, which also came about when contracts failed to address "new media" realities and loopholes, resulted in scuttled projects, shortened seasons of popular television shows and an influx of reality shows to fill the schedule gaps. Most networks and streamers have content reserves to fill the gaps for a bit.

WHAT NOW?

We wait.

## Microsoft: Russia behind 58% of detected state-backed hacks

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Russia accounted for most state-sponsored hacking detected by Microsoft over the past year, with a 58% share, mostly targeting government agencies and think tanks in the United States, followed by Ukraine, Britain and European NATO members, the company said.

The devastating effectiveness of the long-undetected SolarWinds hack — it mainly breached information technology businesses including Microsoft — also boosted Russian state-backed hackers' success rate to 32% in the year ending June 30, compared with 21% in the preceding 12 months.

China, meanwhile, accounted for fewer than 1 in 10 of the state-backed hacking attempts Microsoft detected but was successful 44% of the time in breaking into targeted networks, Microsoft said in its second annual Digital Defense Report, which covers July 2020 through June 2021.

While Russia's prolific state-sponsored hacking is well known, Microsoft's report offers unusually specific detail on how it stacks up against that by other U.S. adversaries.

The report also cited ransomware attacks as a serious and growing plague, with the United States by far the most targeted country, hit by more than triple the attacks of the next most targeted nation. Ransomware attacks are criminal and financially motivated.

By contrast, state-backed hacking is chiefly about intelligence gathering — whether for national security or commercial or strategic advantage — and thus generally tolerated by governments, with U.S. cyber operators among the most skilled. The report by Microsoft Corp., which works closely with Washington government agencies, does not address U.S. government hacking.

The SolarWinds hack was such an embarrassment to the U.S. government, however, that some Washington lawmakers demanded some sort of retaliation. President Joe Biden has had a difficult time drawing a red line for what cyberactivity is permissible. He has issued vague warnings to President Vladimir Putin to get him to crack down on ransomware criminals, but several top administration cybersecurity officials said this week that they have seen no evidence of that.

Overall, nation-state hacking has about a 10%-20% success rate, said Cristin Goodwin, who heads Microsoft's Digital Security Unit, which is focused on nation-state actors. "It's something that's really important for us to try to stay ahead of — and keep driving that compromised number down — because the lower it gets, the better we're doing," Goodwin said.

Goodwin finds China's "geopolitical goals" in its recent cyberespionage especially notable, including targeting foreign ministries in Central and South American countries where it is making Belt-and-Road-Initiative infrastructure investments and universities in Taiwan and Hong Kong where resistance to Beijing's regional ambitions is strong. The findings further belie as obsolete any conventional wisdom that Chinese cyber spies' interests are limited to pilfering intellectual property.

Russian hack attempts were up from 52% in the 2019-20 period as a share of global cyber-intrusion bids detected by the "nation-state notification service" that Microsoft employs to alert its customers. For the year ending June 30, North Korea was second as country of origin at 23%, up from less than 11% previously. China dipped to 8% from 12%.

But attempt volume and efficacy are different matters. North Korea's failure rate on spear-phishing — targeting individuals, usually with booby-trapped emails — was 94% in the past year, Microsoft found.

Only 4% of all state-backed hacking that Microsoft detected targeted critical infrastructure, the Redmond,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 77 of 78

Washington-based company said, with Russian agents far less interested in it than Chinese or Iranian cyber-operatives.

After the SolarWinds hack was discovered in December, the Russians transitioned back to focus mostly on government agencies involved in foreign policy, defense and national security, followed by think tanks then health care, where they targeted organizations developing and testing COVID-19 vaccines and treatments in the United States, Australia, Canada, Israel, India and Japan.

In the report, Microsoft said Russian state hackers' recent greater efficacy "could portend more high-impact compromises in the year ahead." Accounting for more 92% of the detected Russian activity was the elite hacking team in Russia's SVR foreign intelligence agency best known as Cozy Bear.

Cozy Bear, which Microsoft calls Nobelium, was behind the SolarWinds hack, which went undetected for most of 2020 and whose discovery badly embarrassed Washington. Among badly compromised U.S. government agencies was the Department of Justice, from which the Russian cyber spies exfiltrated 80% of the email accounts used by the U.S. attorneys' offices in New York.

Microsoft's nation-state notifications, of which about 7,500 were issued globally in the period covered by the report, are by no means exhaustive. They only reflect what Microsoft detects.

## US jobless claims fall to 326,000, first drop in four weeks

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell last week, another sign that the U.S. job market and economy continue their steady recovery from last year's coronavirus recession.

Unemployment claims fell by 38,000 to 326,000, the first drop in four weeks, the Labor Department said Thursday. Since surpassing 900,000 in early January, the weekly applications, a proxy for layoffs, had fallen more or less steadily all year. Still, they remain elevated from pre-pandemic levels: Before COVID-19 hammered the U.S. economy in March 2020, weekly claims were consistently coming in at around 220,000.

After hitting a pandemic low of 312,000 in early September, claims had risen three straight weeks, suggesting that the highly contagious delta variant was at least temporarily disrupting a recovery in jobs.

Contingent Macro Advisors said the recent uptick was also partly caused by backlog in processing orders in California and other states. Shutdowns at auto plants resulting from a shortage of computer chips could make the numbers volatile over the next few weeks, Contingent said, but "the trend towards lower jobless claims remains intact."

Overall, the job market has been rebounding with surprising strength since the spring of 2020. Forced to shut down or restrict hours as a health precaution, employers slashed more than 22 million jobs in March and April last year. But massive aid from the federal government and the rollout of vaccines has supported an economic recovery, providing consumers with the financial wherewithal to spend and the confidence to return to restaurants, bars and shops.

So far this year, employers have been adding 586,000 jobs a month, and this month's employment report, due Friday, is expected to show they tacked on another 488,000 in September, according to a survey of economists by the data firm FactSet.

Companies are now complaining that they can't find workers fast enough to fill their job openings, a record 10.9 million in July.

Altogether, 2.7 million Americans were receiving some type of jobless aid the week of Sept. 25, down by 97,000 from the week before. In early September, the federal government stopped additional aid — including \$300 a week on top of traditional state benefits — that was meant to ease the economic impact of the pandemic.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined  
Today in History

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Oct. 08, 2021 ~ Vol. 30 - No. 093 ~ 78 of 78

Today is Friday, Oct. 8, the 281st day of 2021. There are 84 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 8, 1985, the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) killed American passenger Leon Klinghoffer, who was in a wheelchair, and threw his body overboard.

On this date:

In 1871, the Great Chicago Fire erupted; fires also broke out in Peshtigo, Wisconsin, and in several communities in Michigan.

In 1918, U.S. Army Cpl. Alvin C. York led an attack that killed 25 German soldiers and resulted in the capture of 132 others in the Argonne Forest in France.

In 1934, Bruno Hauptmann was indicted by a grand jury in New Jersey for murder in the death of the kidnapped son of Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman told a press conference in Tiptonville, Tennessee, that the secret scientific knowledge behind the atomic bomb would be shared only with Britain and Canada.

In 1956, Don Larsen pitched the only perfect game in a World Series to date as the New York Yankees beat the Brooklyn Dodgers in Game 5, 2-0.

In 1981, at the White House, President Ronald Reagan greeted former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Richard Nixon, who were preparing to travel to Egypt for the funeral of Anwar Sadat.

In 1997, scientists reported the Mars Pathfinder had yielded what could be the strongest evidence yet that Mars might once have been hospitable to life.

In 1998, the House triggered an open-ended impeachment inquiry against President Bill Clinton in a momentous 258-176 vote; 31 Democrats joined majority Republicans in opening the way for nationally televised impeachment hearings.

In 2002, a federal judge approved President George W. Bush's request to reopen West Coast ports, ending a 10-day labor lockout that was costing the U.S. economy an estimated \$1 to \$2 billion a day.

In 2005, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake flattened villages on the Pakistan-India border, killing an estimated 86,000 people.

In 2010, British aid worker Linda Norgrove, who'd been taken captive in Afghanistan, was killed during a U.S. special forces rescue attempt, apparently by a U.S. grenade.

In 2015, chef Paul Prudhomme, 75, who'd sparked a nationwide interest in Cajun food, died in New Orleans.

Ten years ago: Scott Anderson became the first openly gay ordained Presbyterian minister during a ceremony at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Madison, Wisconsin. Al Davis, the Hall of Fame owner of the Oakland Raiders, died at age 82. Pianist Roger Williams, 87, died in Los Angeles.

Five years ago: Donald Trump vowed on Twitter to continue his campaign even though he said the "media and establishment" wanted him out of the race "so badly"; many Republicans were calling on Trump to abandon his presidential bid in the wake of the release of a 2005 video in which he made lewd remarks about women and appeared to condone sexual assault.

One year ago: Authorities in Michigan said six men had been charged with conspiring to kidnap Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in reaction to what they viewed as her "uncontrolled power." (One of the six pleaded guilty and was sentenced to just over six years in prison.) Separately, seven others linked to a paramilitary group were charged in state court for allegedly seeking to storm the Michigan Capitol and seek a "civil war." Democrat Joe Biden said President Donald Trump's tweet earlier in the year to "LIBERATE MICHIGAN" may have encouraged the alleged kidnapping plot. Trump insisted that he was ready to resume campaign rallies and said he felt "perfect" one week after his diagnosis with the coronavirus. Whitey Ford, a Hall of Fame pitcher for the New York Yankees, died at 91.

Today's Birthdays: Entertainment reporter Rona Barrett is 85. Actor Paul Hogan is 82. R&B singer Fred Cash (The Impressions) is 81. Civil rights activist Rev. Jesse Jackson is 80. Comedian Chevy Chase is 78. Author R.L. Stine is 78. Actor Dale Dye is 77. Country singer Susan Raye is 77. TV personality Sarah Purcell is 73. R&B singer Airrion Love (The Stylistics) is 72. Actor Sigourney Weaver is 72. R&B singer Robert "Kool" Bell (Kool & the Gang) is 71. Producer-director Edward Zwick is 69. Country singer-musician Ricky